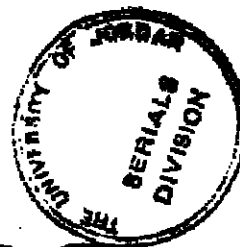


Israel's new figure sentenced

WASHINGTON (AP) — Israel's new prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, was sentenced Wednesday to two years' imprisonment for accepting bribes from a company that had secured a contract to build a new government building in Jerusalem.

Jordan Times

An independent political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
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HURRY...WHILE QUANTITIES LAST!

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Peres: New ideas proposed to break peace effort deadlock

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israeli Vice-Premier Shimon Peres said he and President Hosni Mubarak discussed "new ideas" Wednesday to overcome the difficult peace effort deadlock.

"I think I will be going back... with some messages of importance," Peres, who is also finance minister, told reporters after a meeting of about 90 minutes with Mubarak.

As he did when he arrived Tuesday night, Peres said agreement was close on convening an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue in Cairo as a step towards peace negotiations.

But Israel Radio Wednesday quoted a spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir as disputing Peres' optimistic appraisal.

Peres heads Israel's Labour Party, which joined Shamir's Likud bloc in a coalition cabinet in late 1988 after inconclusive parliamentary elections.

Peres did not say who presented the ideas he discussed with Mubarak. Nor did he indicate whether the messages he was taking from Cairo are Mubarak's views or the Egyptian president's reactions to Israeli ideas.

Peres said, however, that some of the ideas concern completion of the Palestinian delegation to the proposed dialogue in Cairo, which Egypt and the United States are pushing. This and the agenda have been major stumbling blocks.

"The remaining problems between us and the Palestinians can be solved rather swiftly and in a

very short while," Peres said.

"There are some new ideas introduced to do so."

Peres refused to be drawn on who would present the Palestinian negotiators but said they could consent whenever they wanted.

"In my judgment the Palestinian delegation is free and can be free to consult with whoever they want all over the world. It is none of our business," he said.

He reiterated that both he and Shamir oppose any participation in the peace process by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). But unlike the handling of the Palestinian delegation, Peres favored including it in the dialogue.

"The Palestinian delegation should be a non-PLO delegation representing the people in the (occupied) territories and not people active outside the territories," Peres said.

He replied with a terse "yes" when asked if it included people who were not PLO members and were not implicated in violent acts.

On the agenda of the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue, Peres hinted at a possible compromise.

He suggested that participants could address any subject in opening statements but confine themselves subsequently to discussion of Israeli-proposed Palestinian actions in the West Bank and Gaza. The polling would be to choose negotiators



A young boy shows the bullets and a Communist Party membership card found after Soviet troops launched a violent crackdown on militants in the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Caucasus.

Troops round up Azeri activists

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Soviet troops seized nationalist leaders Wednesday in an overnight crackdown on resistance to the Kremlin's military intervention in the rebellious southern Republic of Azerbaijan.

But striking workers defied military orders to go back to work and shots still echoed through the streets of the Azerbaijani capital Baku in what the Soviet government newspaper Izvestia called a guerrilla war.

The official death toll in clashes between the army and civilians has now risen to 99 since Moscow sent in the troops early Saturday to enforce a state of emergency and put down what it saw as a nationalist revolt.

But in Moscow Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov rejected suggestions that the mounting problems in the Soviet Union's restive outlying republics threatened President Mikhail Gorbachev.

"There is no alternative to it (the leadership). There are no alternative policies," he told correspondents after a routine news briefing.

Soviet troops have also seized copying machines and banning demonstrations and strikes in Azerbaijan.

The ban on protests in Baku was accompanied by warnings that activists would face 30 days in jail if they tried to organize demonstrations, the official news agency TASS reported.

Demonstrations have occurred almost daily in Baku for weeks. The government moves follow escalating unrest in the southern

Caucasus republic sparked by a dispute between mostly Muslim Azerbaijanis and mainly Christian Armenians over Nagorno-Karabakh, and Armenian-dominated enclave in Azerbaijan.

Violence erupted Jan. 13 with anti-Armenian rioting in Baku that killed dozens of Armenians and forced 16,000 to flee. The unrest spread as Armenians and Azerbaijanis, armed with weapons seized from police and military installations, fought in the hills around Nagorno-Karabakh.

TASS, quoting a communique from Baku's military commander, Lieutenant General Anatoly Dubyniyak, said 43 people had been arrested overnight in raids on "illegally functioning organizations."

Another 57 were held for breaking the curfew in Baku and 53 were "detained administratively," TASS said without explanation.

Dubyniyak did not name the illegal organizations but a member of the nationalist Popular Front said those arrested belonged to its affiliate, the Council of National Defence, and the front itself.

An editor with the official Azerbaijan news agency said only members of the more extreme Council of National Defence had been arrested.

The council was abolished by a military decree published on Tuesday evening.

Talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan on ending border clashes between the republics

Qasem, Belgian foreign minister discuss Mideast developments, bilateral ties Eyskens: Israel's settlement plans do not facilitate peace

AMMAN (Agencies) — Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens said Wednesday that Israel's proposals to settle Soviet immigrants in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip would not facilitate efforts for peace in the Middle East.

Eyskens made the statement upon arrival here for a three-day official visit during which he will discuss the Middle East question, other international and regional matters and subjects of concern to Jordan and Belgium with Jordanian officials.

"The European Community (EC) deeply regrets the continued acts of violence and Israel's repressive measures in the occupied Arab territories because such actions do not help peace efforts," the minister was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Asked about Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's recent contention that a "big Israel" was needed to hold an expected influx of Soviet Jews, Eyskens reassured European support for Arab-Israeli peace based partly on Israeli withdrawal from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"I think that (Shamir's comments) will not ease the solutions," he said.

Eyskens said he was visiting Jordan because it "is playing an important role as a very active element in what we hope will become a true peace process."

He said the EC would support the Palestinian people under

Israeli rule and would double its present assistance to them.

Eyskens, who is making the visit at the invitation of his Jordanian counterpart Marwan Al Qasem, said that the EC remains committed to its 1980 Venice Declaration, which called for peace in the region through negotiations.

"Jordan is playing an important role in the region with very high esteem for the action of your government and His Majesty the King," the minister told Jordan Television. "I had the pleasure to meet Minister Qasem two times in Brussels. I was very impressed by the accuracy of his analysis and we are doing our best within the EC. I think many international relations in the future will depend upon the development of good relations between the EC and other countries, especially here in the Near East. We had in December a Euro-Arab summit in Paris. This was a very important initiative taken by the French president."

"We have drawn a lot of conclusions at that meeting and we have now tried to implement these peace conclusions."

He said he looked in the future towards possible cooperation between the EC and the four-country Arab Cooperation Council (ACC).

Formal talks begin

Later Wednesday, Qasem and Eyskens held talks on bilateral

relations and reviewed developments in the Middle East. Qasem expressed Jordan's appreciation to for Belgium's constructive role within the EC and said Jordan was attaching great importance to the EC role in the region.

Qasem reviewed Jordan's past and present efforts to reach a just settlement to the Arab Israeli conflict and referred to the positive stand of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Arab World. He said that Israel's intransigent position was the major stumbling bloc in the path of peace.

Qasem also pointed out the danger inherent in the continued Jewish immigration to Palestine. Eyskens voiced Belgium's total support for Jordan's policies and said that precious time was lost with nothing being achieved on the road to peace.

In his arrival comments, Eyskens also said: "The developing world should not fear that Western aid to Eastern Europe will mean less help for poorer nations. 'We in the (European) Community think that our relations with the south... are at least as essential as our new links with the countries of Eastern Europe,'" he said.

The minister said that revived economies in Eastern Europe could help provide new markets for Arab countries and said East-West détente could lead to arms cuts which would free "a lot of money which we could use for cooperation and development."

Official denies Israeli reports of shooting

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A senior Jordanian official Wednesday denied Israeli reports of shooting across the demarcation line Tuesday night and said that there was no shooting from the Jordanian side.

The official, who did not wish to be identified, told the Jordan Times that "no shooting took place from this side of the border. This is for sure."

Reports from Israel claimed that shooting was heard near a settlement called Hatzeva across the demarcation line around 8 p.m. Tuesday but that there were no signs of any "infiltration."

"These Israeli reports are totally without substance and they only show Israel's insistence on creating tension across the borders," the Jordanian official said. "They are meant as a form of pressure on Jordan," he added.

Meanwhile a Jordanian military source denied reports that two Soviet-made rocket launchers were found during a search of the Jordanian side of the demarcation line.

According to the source, quoted by the Associated Press, the Jordanian army "has not found anything and these are only media reports."

Earlier reports quoted unidentified government sources as saying that the Jordanian army found the rocket launchers on the Jordanian side of the demarcation line but they did not say exactly when or where the rockets had been found.

Husseini says he was offered plea-bargain deal

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Faisal Al-Husseini said Israeli police had tried to get him to confess to involvement in the intifada in return for the release of other Arab detainees.

The daily tabloid Hadashot Wednesday quoted him as saying he rejected the deal which would have removed him from the peace process. He would have gone to jail for a few years and others arrested in connection with the case would have been freed.

Husseini, widely regarded as the pre-eminent leader in the occupied territories, was arrested last Friday on suspicion of helping to finance the 25-month-old Palestinian uprising. He was released Monday.

He said he told the Shin Bet secret police: "If I am innocent then I will not confess to something that I did not do, and if I truly built a (nationalist) network, then you can destroy it whenever you like."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir hopes to exclude Husseini from proposed talks with Palestinians in Cairo because of his alleged links to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and because he lives in Arab Jerusalem, where Shamir contends Palestinians have no national claim.

Husseini said he told his Israeli

interrogators: "I am not interested in a network like this, and if I am really who you say I am, then it is better that I remain in prison."

Husseini's family confirmed the newspaper report. A police spokeswoman said she was checking it.

Husseini, 49, has been jailed without trial for 18 months in the past three years on suspicion of links to a "hostile organization," meaning the PLO.

Husseini was named last week in an indictment against five Palestinians as having paid \$450 for para-military uniforms, but he said the money was for plumbing in his home.

His family was unsure how many people had been arrested in connection with his case but he told Hadashot that the Shin Bet threatened to use the other detainees to incriminate him if he did not accept the plea bargain.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler welcomed the release of Husseini.

Tutwiler said that "we are pleased that Israeli authorities have released" Husseini.

"We hope that both sides will now adopt measures that send positive signals regarding the importance of dialogue and accommodation," Tutwiler said.

U.S. fears 'radicalisation' of W. Bank, Gaza

WASHINGTON (R) — Islamic fundamentalists rejecting coexistence with Israel could emerge as the dominant force in the occupied West Bank and Gaza if current efforts to establish an Israeli-Palestinian peace dialogue fail, a senior U.S. official said Wednesday.

The official, a key Bush administration policy-maker on the Middle East, also told Reuters in an interview that should Israel appear to be vacillating on the peace process, it would be unlikely to get the extra aid it needs to absorb an influx of Soviet Jewish immigrants.

The same held if Israel tried to settle Soviet Jews in its West Bank and Gaza.

"The commitment of people here to contribute is going to be influenced by what they see as an Israeli approach that does not introduce the territories into this equation and also has an Israeli government that looks like it is doing all it can on the peace

issue," said the official, who asked not to be identified.

On the "radicalisation" of the territories, which has been spurred by the two-year Palestinian uprising, the official said:

"If one looks at the changes that are taking place in the (occupied) territories, there is a marriage of demographics and zeal. Time does not serve our interests."

"I believe you have a traditional elite in the territories that very much would like to have a (peace) process because they fear they will be supplanted by those whose commitment is really to struggle and not towards reconciliation."

It was the clearest warning yet from the Bush administration that it views the advance of Islamic fundamentalist organisations like the Hamas group as a growing threat to the peace process.

"Quite frankly, my feeling is those who embody this attitude, whether they are Hamas or they are more amorphous in terms of

any particular identification — those groups really are opposed to any kind of deal at all," the official said.

The United States is working to get peace talks underway between Israel and a Palestinian delegation but its efforts have been thwarted by disagreements over who should represent the Palestinians.

The official said there had been some progress in recent days but dismissed a statement by Israeli Vice-Premier Shimon Peres in Cairo Tuesday that the sides were close to agreement.

The U.S. official said Washington had not yet even begun to tackle the question of the delegation and was still trying to work out a way to provide Israel and Egypt with assurances they had requested regarding the peace process.

"We have not really got into the name game. We're trying to nail down assurances that require that each side avoids certain sym-

bols while we address some of their concerns," he said.

On the flood of Soviet Jews to Israel, which last week prompted Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to speak of the "need" for a "big Israel" to absorb them, the official said any move to settle more Jews in West Bank settlements would get short shrift from the United States and American Jewry.

As many as 400,000 Soviet Jews could arrive in Israel over the next two years, according to estimates accepted by Washington. The United States says it will only accept 500,000 Soviet refugees a year.

"Israel looks to world Jewry and especially American Jewry to provide at least \$500 million and that figure is likely to go up. They're looking as well to Congress to provide money. The fact is they're not going to get money if they're going to suggest settling them in the West Bank," the official said.

Merchants, ministry embroiled in row over prices

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian merchants and the Ministry of Supply are embroiled in a dispute over imported food supplies which are lying in the ministry warehouses for the past one and a half months awaiting to be priced before they can be sold in the markets.

The issue, which has been discussed openly and in the media, took a new turn Wednesday when the chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce (FJCC) sent a memorandum to Prime Minister Mudar Badran urging the government to speed up the pricing process before the stored food supplies become unfit for human consumption.

Commenting on the demand, Minister of Supply Nabil Abul Huda said in a statement that merchants had been demanding

higher prices for the food supplies, which includes tea, cooking fat, butter, frozen beef, sardines and cheese. He said the merchants were demanding 10 to 30 per cent hikes over the current market prices arguing that they were paying extra for these imports in view of the devalued Jordanian dinar against the U.S. dollar and other foreign currencies.

Asfour said in his memorandum that most of the JD 1 million worth of foodstuffs could go bad any time if they were not priced and sent out to the market.

Asfour said in a statement later to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that many merchants would be discouraged from ordering further shipments thus causing an acute shortage of food in the local market.

FJCC Chairman Mohammad

Asfour said that merchants "have been patient with the ministry, which slashed their profits first to 19 per cent and then to 15 per cent, down from an original 22 per cent, and they are willing to accept the 15 per cent profit margin if the supplies are released soon."

Asfour said prices were going up all the time in the countries of origin and in view of the devalued dinar the food commodities were bound to have a higher price in the local market.

In a statement carried by Petra in reply to the memo, Abul Huda said that as the merchants continue to demand higher prices for the imported supplies members of parliament were demanding a reduction of prices, particularly basic food commodities.

The ministry has set a policy that gives priority to providing basic

food commodities at reasonable prices to help limited income groups, he said.

To end the deadlock, Abul Huda said, the Ministry of Supply has asked the merchants and Jordanian officials and parliamentarians to convene a meeting and reach a compromise.

Following a dialogue with the merchants, the ministry decided to contact countries that supplied the products to determine a fair price for the food products before selling them to the public in Jordan and the ministry is still awaiting answers, Petra said.

Abul Huda said the Ministry of Supply concedes that merchants should make a profit but do not want to see the consumers suffer. The ministry, he said, will try to arrive at a fair solution as soon as possible.

Kuwaiti leader begins dialogue on democracy

KUWAIT (AP) — The crown prince has conferred with about 30 former parliament deputies and key political figures in what government sources described Wednesday as the start of a dialogue about some form of representative government.

The office of Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, who is also prime minister, has not commented publicly on the talks.

The issue of reviving the parliament, dissolved in 1966, has gripped this country for the past two months.

Former MPs began campaigning in November for recalling parliament, using traditional social gathering places known as diwanis as a rallying point. The interior minister banned such gatherings, which usually take place Monday nights, and has used force to disperse them.

Five people were arrested when the government broke up a gathering of 2,000 people Monday.

The emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, told the country in a radio and television address last week that he supported expanding democracy in the country. But he did not say he would restore the 50-member elected parliament nor specify what form the expansion would

Superpowers agree on arms inspections

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. and Soviet negotiators have signed an agreement to allow the first-ever inspection of each other's warheads as a means of speeding work on concluding a treaty to cut superpower nuclear arsenals, a State Department spokesman said Wednesday.

The agreement, signed Monday in Geneva at the 13th round of strategic arms reduction treaty (START) talks, will allow specialists from each side to demonstrate methods of verifying the number of warheads on two missiles from each superpower, one intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and one submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM).

"This agreement marks the first time that the U.S. and the Soviet Union will inspect a number of each other's nuclear warheads on ballistic missiles," said David Denny, a State Department spokesman, reading a prepared statement.

The statement did not disclose how, when or where the inspections would take place.

Secretary of State James Baker is to hold talks in Moscow Feb. 6-7 with Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze in an effort to speed work on the START accord for possible signing of at

an expected summit next June.

President George Bush last June proposed that the two sides test verification techniques before conclusion of START, an unusual step designed to enhance ability to monitor the compliance of the other side.

Three previous arms control treaties have not been ratified by the Senate, in large measure because of doubts that they could be verified.

The administration said the agreement signed in Geneva was "not only an important step towards an effectively verifiable START treaty, but also a step towards greater transparency and hence greater predictability in the U.S.-Soviet relationship."

At the 1987 Washington summit, the sides agreed on the number of warheads to be attributed to each existing type of strategic ballistic missile and on the need for on-site inspections to verify that those numbers were not exceeded.

"Early agreement and implementation of such measures will give both sides practical experience which in turn will speed the process of resolving outstanding verification issues and facilitate the conclusion of a START treaty," the statement said.

Hrawi plans security force

BEIRUT (AP) — The government of President Elias Hrawi is to form a 400-man force with commando training to try to combat kidnappings and other acts of terrorism in west Beirut, military sources said Wednesday.

In another security development, clashes renewed between rival Shi'ite Muslim militias in South Lebanon after a relative lull of 16 days.

Police said the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) and the mainstream Shi'ite militia Amal were locked in an artillery and rocket duel in Iqlim Al Tufah province south of Beirut.

"No advances were reported by either side," said police spokesman. He said a casualty report from the renewed flareup was not immediately available.

By police count, 97 people have been killed and 277 wounded in Amal-Hizbollah clashes in the province since they broke out Dec. 23.

A Lebanese military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the 400-strong squad will be drawn from the army's Mukafaha (Combat) Brigade and the police rapid intervention force in a move meant to encourage foreign diplomats to return to a planned militia-free west Beirut.

The Mukafaha and rapid intervention force members are given special commando training and special weapons to deal with such terrorism or kidnappings. Further details on the weapons were not available.

The creation of the force is part of a security plan, the highlights of which were worked out by

Hrawi and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in three days of talks in Damascus that ended Tuesday.

Hrawi, in a joint news conference with Assad winding up their discussion, said the security plan was designed to change the city's western sector into an "oasis of peace."

Assad said Syria's 40,000 troops in Lebanon could extend help to Hrawi's army in enforcing law and order, if such help was requested.

The military source said a 3,000-strong brigade from Hrawi's 22,000-strong army will deploy in west Beirut in the first stage of the security plan, details of which will be discussed next week during a visit by army commander Emile Lahoud to Damascus.

Lahoud was appointed army commander by Hrawi, a few hours after he was elected president Nov. 24.

Hrawi dismissed maverick Christian General Michel Aoun as commander-in-chief of the armed forces and interim prime minister. However, the rebellious officer refused to hand over the presidential palace to the new head of state.

Hrawi, Aoun and Lahoud are Maronite Catholics, the Christian community that dominated political life in Lebanon since the country's independence from France in 1943.

The new, 400-member anti-terrorist force "will be trained on special assignments and might be equipped with helicopters for raid intervention in case it is needed to deal with special and sensitive



Elias Hrawi

assignments, such as protecting foreign diplomats, vital interests and government officials," the source said.

"The new force will be on call 24 hours a day. This will create an atmosphere of security and encourage foreign diplomatic missions to return to west Beirut," the source added.

All Western diplomatic missions have evacuated west Beirut since mid-1984 to avoid a wave of terrorist attacks and kidnappings of foreigners mostly blamed on pro-Iranian underground factions affiliated with Hizbollah.

In all, 18 foreigners, including eight Americans, are missing and believed held hostage in Lebanon since 1985.

Hrawi Wednesday summoned Lahoud and his senior military aides to a meeting to discuss details of the security plan, prior to the general's visit to Damascus.

"The militias will be banned in west Beirut," the military source said.

Asked whether the proposed security plan would also cover the slums of south Beirut, a Hizbollah stronghold where most of the Western hostages are believed held, the security source said, "Most probably, south Beirut will be included." He refused to elaborate.

The Western captives, in addition to the Americans, are four Britons, two West Germans, two Swiss, an Irishman and an Italian.

American journalist Terry Anderson, chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press, is the longest-held foreign hostage. He was kidnapped in west Beirut March 16, 1985.

In another Lebanon development, the country's seven functioning daily papers did not publish Wednesday due to a strike by their staff.

Newspaper editors also staged a two-hour sit-in at the offices of the newspaper publishers syndicate in west Beirut's Raouche district to protest Aoun's measures.

Aoun, in a directive issued more than a week ago, banned the press from calling Hrawi president.

Aoun's wrath against violators of his measure targeted news organizations operating in the 800-square-kilometre Christian enclave northeast of Beirut.



Palestinians paint nationalist slogans in Gaza

CIA expects increased reliance on Gulf oil, intensified uprising

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), William Webster, says that Western dependence on Gulf oil "will rise dramatically" by the end of this decade.

Testifying before a Senate Armed Services committee hearing Tuesday, Webster also said that barring a renewed Middle East peace process the Palestinian uprising could become even "more violent."

"Western dependence on Persian Gulf oil will rise dramatically," he said in prepared testimony. "By the year 2000, Gulf

states will supply an estimated 40 per cent of Western oil, up from about 30 per cent today. Meanwhile, U.S. dependence is expected to rise from about 10 per cent to roughly 25 per cent by the end of the decade."

On the Arab-Israeli peace process, he said: "If the peace process does not advance over the next several years, the intifada is likely to become more violent, terrorism will probably rise, and Arab pressure on the United States to impose settlement will increase."

Following are excerpts from Webster's testimony related to

the Middle East.

"In the Middle East, local antagonisms remain a major danger. Regional leaders will be inhibited in their traditional game of pitting the superpowers against each other. As a result, local disputes are now less likely to trigger East-West confrontation, but may be more likely to occur."

"We may now have a better chance of achieving a resolution of the conflict in Afghanistan that brings stability to that country and the region while allowing the Afghans to determine their own future."

"Increased Soviet flexibility

and moderation will also present new challenges. Gorbachev's policies have already gained Moscow greater access to moderate regimes such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Better relations with Iran — including expanded military ties — could also develop, but will be constrained by the situation in Azerbaijan and a number of factors.

"The anti-U.S. stance of Iran and Libya probably will be slower to change, and we remain concerned about the terrorist threat those regimes pose to the United States." (See related story on page 8).

Kabul claims to be stronger than ever

KABUL (R) — Some 70 per cent of all Mujahideen rebels have stopped fighting the Soviet-backed Afghan government and Kabul has grown stronger than ever in the past year, according to government spokesman Mohammad Naqib.

He said in an interview Tuesday the rebels were persuaded to stop fighting because of "live and let live agreements" reached with them.

His claim could not be independently confirmed. Naqib told Reuters the government was stronger than it was when the Soviets pulled out of Afghanistan last Feb. 15.

"The fact that we have no one to depend on has given us greater resolve to defend ourselves," he said.

Naqib gave no figures but said senior Afghan military officers have said about 100,000 former guerrillas now act as pro-government militias.

He said in the three years since the government launched its national reconciliation programme "some 70 per cent of all armed groups have stopped fighting us."

He said rebels sometimes managed to block the Salang Highway, Kabul's main link with the Soviet Union, but could not disrupt the flow of supplies for long periods.

As the bulk of Soviet military and food supplies were coming by road, the Moscow-Kabul airbridge has diminished, he said.

At his regular press briefing Tuesday, Naqib said at least 58 guerrillas were killed and 43 wounded in operations mounted by government troops in the last four days.

No government casualties were reported and the guerrilla casualties could not be confirmed.

Naqib said in the same period, rockets fired from rebel

mountain strongholds at the eastern city of Jalalabad and surrounding areas killed one soldier and wounded eight others.

Government troops retaliated with air and artillery strikes, "putting out of action" 83 Mujahideen rebels, he said.

The rebels launched a major offensive to seize Jalalabad after the Soviet withdrawal but failed, underscoring their inability to conduct conventional warfare.

Naqib said the government gave 450,000 Afghans (\$900) to 65 families whose homes were destroyed in rebel rocket attacks last week in Kabul.

More than 800 residents in the capital have been killed in hapazard rocket attacks since the Soviet pullout, according to official figures.

"Spy" convicted

A Muslim from Soviet Central Asia has been sentenced to eight years in prison on charges of spying for Afghan rebels, the TASS news agency reported.

TASS said Abdulhamid Davlatov tried to set up an underground group of Soviet Muslims in the Republic of Tadzhikistan "to struggle for the overthrow of the existing system."

The report came at a time when predominantly Muslim Azerbaijanis have torn down large sections of the border with Iran, entered open battles with their mainly Christian Armenian neighbours and begun calling for secession. The unrest, which has evoked approving reaction to fundamentalist Iran, has raised the prospect long predicted by Western scholars of an Islamic awakening among the Soviet Union's tens of millions of Muslims.

Davlatov, 34, crossed the border into Afghanistan in mid-1988 and was sent by Afghan rebels tied up with an intelligence centre in Pakistan, TASS said.

Rival protesters gather in Tehran

NICOSIA (R) — Relatives of jailed or executed dissidents demonstrated outside the U.N. office in Tehran where families of Iranians killed by government opponents also gathered demanding to meet a visiting U.N. human rights envoy.

The Mujahideen-e-Khalq opposition group said a vigil began Monday swelled by Wednesday to a 1,000-strong gathering seeking to tell Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, a U.N. human rights commission investigator, about torture and execution of their kin.

Iran's official news agency IRNA said late Tuesday that families who had lost relatives in Mujahideen attacks had also massed at the U.N. office in north Tehran, demanding to meet Pohl to "reveal crimes committed by the terrorist group."

The IRNA report, monitored in Cyprus, was the first mention of the anti-government sit-in in official Iranian media.

IRNA said the gatherings dispersed at dusk Tuesday. The Iraq-based Mujahideen said in a telex to Reuters protesters and security forces had clashed, but gave no details.

Algeria walks tightrope between democracy, turmoil

By Philip Shehadi

Reuters

ALGIERS — Algeria is walking a tightrope between democracy and turmoil as rapid liberalisation brings a flowering of new political parties and mounting social unrest.

Eighteen political parties now jostle for support in a country where only five months ago a single legal party, the National Liberation Front (FLN), ruled supreme.

But President Chadli Benjedid has found that greater democracy combined with economic crisis can lead to turmoil.

Muslim fundamentalists have been blamed for recent violent attacks against a police station and a court. Strikes have been hitting the crippled economy at an average of eight a day.

"Has freedom become an impossible dream?" asked the liberal weekly *Algerie Actualite*. "Must we pass through generalised chaos before attaining it?"

Rather than clamp down on unrest, Benjedid and Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche

are pressing ahead with economic liberalisation and unprecedented multi-party elections later this year.

Political analysts say the government is taking a high-risk gamble that real democracy will in the end promote political stability by offering channels for peaceful protest.

"If this opening had not been even more trouble," said Youssef Ikhlef, executive bureau member of the Socialist Democratic Party (PSD). "Political parties can play a key role in maintaining stability," he told Reuters.

Hamrouche has been careful not to blame any political party for the unrest, pointing the finger at black marketers and forces opposed to the emerging democratic system.

Opposition activists say they have been remarkably free to operate in a country that had been a one-party state for 27 years.

"Most (FLN) officials have accepted to play the democratic game," said Ikhlef. He said that in one case when a PSD activist was harassed, protesters were taken against the officials

responsible. He said the PSD and other opposition parties still lacked money and sufficient access to state-controlled media.

They criticise what they say is a continued monopoly of state funds by the FLN, and an electoral law that favours the biggest party, likely to be the FLN of the strongest opposition group, the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Benjedid earlier this month met top opposition leaders from the liberal-left PSD, which favours liberalisation of the state-dominated economy, the FIS, which wants Islamic law, and the Communist Avant-garde Socialist Party.

Two other parties, Rally for Culture and Democracy and the Socialist Forces Front, are dominated by non-Arab Berbers. They favour a liberal-left economic programme and greater recognition for Berber culture.

A host of smaller parties offer an array of acronyms and ideologies, from the Trotskyist Socialist Workers' Party to the cryptic Algerian Party for the Capital Man.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME ONE	
15:30	Koran
15:45	Children programme
17:10	Book of Adventure
18:00	News for the Deaf
18:20	Religious programme
19:00	Health programme
19:30	Programme review
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Local series
21:30	Programme review
21:40	Local programme
22:30	Arabic film
23:00	News in Arabic
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Tel Pore Tel File
18:30	La Chance aux chansons
19:00	News in French
19:30	Science on Tourne
19:50	News in Hebrew
19:55	Varieties
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	A Different World
21:10	Documentary
22:30	News in English
22:30	Feature film: "Separate Tables"
PRAYER TIMES	
05:00	Fajr
06:20	(Sunrise) Dhuha
11:40	Dhuhr
14:00	Asr
17:00	Maghreb
18:20	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish Tel. 616740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrence Church Tel. 622546	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261	
St. Ephrem Church Tel. 771751	
Assiout International Church Tel. 827961, 683326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654932	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be relatively cold with a slight rise of temperatures. Clouds will appear at different altitudes and winds will be southerly westerly. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	-2/10
Aqaba	7/20
Jericho	-4/11
Jordan Valley	0/16
Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 8, Aqaba 17. Humidity readings: Amman 45 per cent, Aqaba 33 per cent.	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:	
Dr. Ahmad Al Dagen	78719
Dr. Amjad Nawar	78106
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim	891256
Dr. Abdul Rahman Jaber	773050
First pharmacy	661912
Perdoux pharmacy	778336
Al Asana pharmacy	637055
Natrouk pharmacy	626572
Al Salama pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shuqran pharmacy	637660
IRBID:	
Dr. Shihada Al Zagh	(-)
Al Sharaa' pharmacy	(682)38
ZARQA:	
Dr. Maitah Al Hijawi	(-)
Khalid pharmacy	95417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	139
Rescue Police	192, 821111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Triffle Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	608800

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813613/22
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	642381/6
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	642412/2
Al-Munawwar Maternity	642362
Maltese, J. Amn.	636140
Palatine, Shuqran	661714
Shuqran Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Munawwar Hospital	667271/9
The Islamic Hospital	665272/7
Al-Ahli, Amman	664166
Al-Ahli, Amman	777101/3
Al-Basir, J. Amn.	775111/26
Army, Amn.	891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital	602409/9
Amal Hospital	674155

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)522025, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:15	Dhahran (RJ)
08:30	Damascus (RJ)
09:20	New Delhi (RJ)
09:30	Cairo (RJ)
10:00	Kuwait (RJ)
10:00	Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
10:00	Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
11:15	Aqaba (RJ)
14:00	Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (RJ)
14:45	Montreal, New York (RJ)
16:00	Kuwait (add.) (RJ)
16:30	Lamaca (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:30	Aqaba (RJ)
09:15	Aqaba (RJ)
09:45	Rome (RJ)
11:00	Kuwait (add.) (RJ)
11:00	London (RJ)
12:15	Paris (RJ)
12:50	Lamaca (RJ)
13:00	Baghdad (RJ)
20:20	Cairo (RJ)
20:45	Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
21:15	Baghdad (RJ)
21:15	Jeddah (RJ)
22:30	Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

17:00	Baghdad (RJ)
18:00	London, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:10	Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
18:30	Bangkok (RJ)
19:45	Rome (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:10	Sanaa (LH)
10:00	Kuwait (add.) (KL)
11:00	Baghdad (IA)
11:40	Riyadh (SV)
12:00	Kuwait (KL)
14:05	Masat, Bahrain (GF)
14:30	Dhahran (TK)
15:30	Dubai (EK)
19:00	Amsterdam (KL)
19:25	Frankfurt (LH)
20:10	Zurich, Lamaca (SR)
21:05	Cairo (MS)
08:35	London (BA)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apples	420 / 380
Bananas	430 / 400
Beans (Makassar)	400 / 350
Beans	600 / 500
Cabbage	90 / 60
Carrot	230 / 180
Cauliflowers	140 / 100
Cucumbers (large)	280 / 200
Cucumbers (small)	440 / 380
Onions	330 / 300
Eggplants	140 / 100
Garlic	800 / 700
Grapefruit	210 / 170
Lemons	220 / 170
Marrow (large)	220 / 150
Marrow (small)	350 / 300
Onions (dry)	270 / 220
Onions (green)	300 / 120
Peas	220 / 180
Orange (Shamout)	330 / 280
Potatoes	220 / 180
Pumpkins	220 / 180
Peppers (small)	600 / 500
Potato	220 / 180
Spinach	220 / 180
Squash	220 / 180
Sweet	330 / 280
Squash	140 / 100

Fundraisers seek to accelerate efforts to help Palestinian uprising

By Marwan M. Shabab
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian People's Committee for the Support of the Intifada announced Wednesday that the committee had raised in excess of JD 1 million in 1989. Founded in February 1988, the committee collected a total of JD 2,409,481 in donations from enterprises and individuals, according to general secretary of the committee, Dr. Mawdoud Al Abbadi. Out of the total JD 2,258,907 were funnelled into the occupied territories in the form of direct assistance to the families of Palestinians killed in the uprising, charitable societies and hospitals, he said.

Abbadi announced that the committee would organize a week-long national campaign, beginning March 21, 1990, which marks the anniversary of the 1968 Karamah Battle, at which the Jordanian army battered the "so-called in-

vincible Israeli troops." This week, Abbadi said, is designed to accelerate the momentum of contributions to the Intifada.

Abbadi told the meeting, chaired by Arab Bank Chairman Abdul Majid Shoman and attended by 125 participants, that the committee had received JD 1,359,228 in 1988 of which JD 966,273 was channelled into the occupied territories. In 1989, the committee received approximately JD 1,108,410 of which JD 1,307,176 were funnelled to the occupied territories. The channelled amount includes the amount which was "in surplus" in 1989 which amounted to JD 395,353.

After giving a detailed report about the fund-raising activities and the efforts of the different branches of the committee in Jordan, the committee's chairman, who included Senator Khalil Salem and President of the Amman Chamber of Industries Khaldoun Abu Hassan as well as Shoman and

Abbadi, urged that fund-raising activities be increased in 1990. Salem informed the audience that in 1988 the number of Palestinians injured in the Intifada increased by 40 per cent and the number killed increased by 88 per cent. "Thus I stress the need to increase the material and moral support in 1990, not to decrease it," he said.

In a one-hour session that followed, the committee presented its financial and administrative reports and citizens, parliamentarians and journalists made recommendations and aired their views on how to increase support for the Intifada.

Several participants said an urgent task of the committee was to make every attempt to bring about more awareness and draw the attention of the international community to the immigration of thousands of Soviet Jews to Israel and the Jewish state's plans to settle them in the occupied territories.

While several participants encouraged schemes to allow for regular fund-raising through obligatory contributions from government agencies and private companies, Deputy Leila Shehail warned that "contributions by obligation could result in a negative reaction."

"Let the people contribute willingly and you will win more than money you will win genuine moral support," the deputy said.

One of the suggestions to raise both financial and moral support for the Intifada was to have artists, filmmakers and other artists create "Intifada art" and have its profits go to the Intifada.

Suggestions for the week-long activities marking Karamah Day in March included a sponsored walk to the King Abdullah Bridge and walks to the American and Soviet embassies to protest their indirect or direct support for the immigration of Soviet Jews.

Jordan faces drain of qualified nurses

AMMAN (J.T.) — Qualified Jordanian nurses are leaving the country for Gulf countries in increased numbers to earn better salaries and the situation is gradually worsening and nearing the "red line" at Jordanian hospitals, according to the president of the Jordanian Nursing Association (JNA).

Hashem Salameh said in a statement quoted by Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily Wednesday that many male and female nurses who graduated Jan. 20 and Jan. 22, 1990 and some of those who graduated in the past four months from nursing schools in Jordan had signed contracts to work in the Gulf states for better pay than they could possibly hope for in Jordan.

In the past week, a medical institution operating in the Gulf

interviewed 72 Jordanian nurses and in the past four months a total of 40 signed contracts for work abroad, Salameh said.

"Each one of the Jordanian nurses costs JD 100 a month in terms of training and accommodation and when they go abroad the country suffers," he said. "The country continues to bring in Chinese, Indian and Filipino nurses to work in Jordan costing a fortune but not getting the highest quality services from them," Salameh said. Each one of the foreign nurses costs the country nearly JD 250 a month at a time when the country is in bad need of foreign currency, Salameh lamented.

The Ministry of Health last April announced that Jordan has a total of 2,210 female nurses of

whom 574 were non-Jordanians, and that the Kingdom will need to have at least 4,000 nurses by the year 2000 to help attain the target of health for all. According to Salameh, Jordan's six nursing training colleges turn out around 350 qualified nurses annually and "if many find work abroad then it will be like planting trees only to see the storm carrying away all the saplings."

Jordan is losing both ways by allowing the nurses to go and bringing in foreign nurses; one by losing financially on training the nurses and two in allowing foreign currency to leak to foreign countries through foreign workers, Salameh explained. He called on the health authorities to create incentives to keep Jordanian nurses in the country.

Ministry warns against early cattle slaughter

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture Wednesday warned cattle and sheep breeders against slaughtering animals at an early age because it could endanger the country's livestock wealth.

The director of the ministry's Animal Health Department, Dr. Ghasoub Al Asali, said in a statement that some stockbreeders slaughter goats, and sheep when they weigh only 10 kilograms due to the shortage of animal feed and to benefit from the present shortage of lean meat in the country as a result of a halt in shipment of fresh meat from Bulgaria and Romania.

Asali said that the meat of the young sheep in particular was not nutritional for humans since it contains only a limited amount of liquid and lacks the amino acids necessary for protein or the body-building element. A sheep can be slaughtered when it weighs 20 kilograms and a goat at 17 kilograms while calves can be slaughtered when they are 250 kilograms.

Asali said butchers found selling meat not according to these standards and specifications would be fined according to the 1973 agriculture law. Asali said that a ministry committee in charge of dealing with the effects of the drought in Jordan had decided to increase the number of centres that distribute animal feed.

Economic researcher Abdul Rahman Al Qataneh presented a paper entitled "Investment Opportunities and Viable Potential Projects." The paper touched on Jordan's industrial imports and the potential to create import substitution in industry. These two papers are part of a study prepared by the RSS Economic Research Centre entitled "Investment Project Profile With Special Emphasis on Medium-Scale Enterprise."

RSS economic researcher Ali Ghezawi presented a paper entitled "Analysis of Domestic Supply and Demand Factors." The paper focused on Jordan's industrial sector in terms of production. The paper also pinpointed specific manufactured products and the distribution of establishments according to the number of employees in all industrial sectors.

The announcement was made by the director of the Amman-based Arab Institute for Banking Studies (AIBS), Dr. Mohammad Hamdi Al Saqqa, at the conclusion of his talks with the IMF Institute Director Gerard Teyssier.

Teyssier left Amman for Washington Tuesday night after delivering lectures at the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) and AIBS. According to Saqqa, IMF specialists will be arriving here at the invitation of AIBS to help promote training in banking to Arab officials and candidates sent by the Arab countries.

Teyssier has promised to discuss with the IMF Institute board the prospect of organising training courses in Amman for Arab bankers instead of holding the courses in Washington, Saqqa said.

The IMF official also met with Minister of Finance Basel Jaradneh, the CBJ Governor Mohammad Saeed Nabulsi and other officials as well as the resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Jordan.

Asked whether his mandate was for his Labour Party only or for the Israeli government, Peres hedged.

Peres said Israeli-Palestinian dialogue in Cairo should serve as "a beginning for a comprehensive

settlement" between Arab and Israel. "The prospects today are better than ever before," he said.

He urged Syria to join in the process and expressed willingness to meet with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in Egypt.

"I think the time has come for Syria to think in terms of tomorrow and not the prejudices of yesterday," the Israeli minister said.

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Panels review bridge procedures

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament's committee in charge of occupied territories affairs and administration held a joint session here Wednesday to discuss matters related to facilities offered to Palestinians crossing into Jordan from the occupied lands and the passage of Palestinian agricultural produce across the bridges.

Jamal Khreisha, chairman of the House's administrative committee, said the question of Palestinians who fail to return to the West Bank was also discussed.

Facilities to Palestinians are

being given within the framework of an agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which has called for proper steps to prevent an exodus of Palestinians from their homeland, Khreisha said after the meeting, which was attended by Minister of Interior Salem Masa'deh.

The interior minister had promised to study a programme for the entry of West Bank and Gaza produce into Jordan with the concerned authorities, Khreisha was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

A report presented to the committee said a total of 378 Palestinians failed to return to the occupied territories in 1989, increasing to 46,353 by the end of last year.

Khreisha also said that many of those who arrived on visit were married to Jordanian women. The report said that nearly 6,000 Palestinian men married women living in Jordan over the past one-and-a-half years, Khreisha added.

Al-Dustour daily reported Wednesday a committee formed by the Ministry of Interior to look into the adverse effects of Jordan's decision to sever administrative ties with the West Bank on Palestinian families had begun discussions.

All facilities to be granted to the Palestinians will be based on the concept of enhancing the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in their homeland and thwarting Israel's attempts to evict the occupied territories from their lawful owners, Al-Dustour quoted Masa'deh as saying.

The minister was quoted as also saying that there were no plans for imposing new restrictions on Palestinians crossing the bridges.

Adopting the multi-media approach enables QOU to provide the opportunity for people who have the desire to pursue higher education but for one reason or another could not.

QOU has set a minimum standard of three credit hours per term to make it possible for those who have other things to do and want to study in their own convenient time. "This is why a student enrolled in QOU can get his degree in minimum four years and maximum of 12," according to Salah.

The university will also offer non-degree courses. "These will be more of refreshment courses to bring post-graduates up-to-date with the latest innovations and developments relevant to their employment area," Salah said.

Another facilitating measure which QOU has adopted is taking into consideration the student's financial status and the economic situation in each individual's country while setting fees.

For example, students of the occupied territories will pay only \$8 for each credit hour, Jordanian students will pay \$15, those from oil producing countries will pay 60 and those from countries which does not produce oil will pay 30," Salah said.

The university expects itself to be able to accommodate 2,600 Jordanians, 3,000 from the West Bank and 1,000 to 1,500 from other Arab countries.

Open university poised to launch courses

By Sahar Obaidat
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Distance education through open universities is an old/new system that is finally being brought back to life here in Jordan. After several attempts, interrupted by haggles over funds and 14 years of preparatory work, Al Quds Open University (QOU) will start its operation in the first quarter of this year.

Adopting a flexible policy, QOU only requires that in order to apply, students should have a Tawjihi or its equivalent regardless of the general average, meaning that admission will be on competitive basis although no minimum grade is set.

According to the president of the university, Dr. Mumber Salah, the project was originally initiated in 1976 in response to the need to offer higher education for Palestinians in the occupied territories and the diaspora as well as elsewhere in the Arab World.

A technical committee comprising the Palestine National Fund, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), studied the feasibility of the project for two years. It prepared a report which was subsequently endorsed by the general conference of UNESCO.

In 1981, the Palestine

National Council (PNC), the Palestinian parliament-in-exile, approved the implementation of the project, and planned a meeting in Beirut in 1982 to finalise the launching of the university, but the Israeli invasion of Lebanon during the same year delayed it until 1985.

In 1985, the project was revived again and work began on drawing up courses and programmes that would address the needs of the Arab World.

"It was decided that QOU would offer five programmes: on land and rural development; on home and family development; on technology and applied sciences; on management and entrepreneurship; and on education," according to Salah.

The university administration spent last year preparing multi-media self-instruction materials necessary for distance education, which primarily involves the broadcast media — radio and television.

This self-directed learning also requires the combined use of printed text, video-cassettes, audio-cassettes, computer discs, slides and transparencies. These will be available to QOU students as soon as they complete registration formalities at the various centres affiliated to the university.

In line with the concept of an "open" university, QOU will establish study centres in proximity to concentration of stu-

dent enrolment. "The university will go wherever the students are instead of the other way around," Salah said.

According to Salah, these centres will be like miniature campuses, equipped with necessary educational facilities such as videos, computers, a specialised library and labs, in addition to the administrative team and tutors.

"These centres will provide the chance for interaction between students and between students and tutors who will provide advice and counselling," he said.

The difference between distance studying and correspondence courses, Salah said, was that letter does not entail any kind of interaction between the student and the university.

"The student reads the books alone and tries to understand them, then a date is set for the exam," he said. "In the other case, the student receives books specially written and elaborately explained as if the student is reading the teacher's notes," he said.

Assignments are also given to the students in addition to the periodical exams held in the sixth and 11th weeks of the course, with the final exams being held in the 16th week.

"We are very much like conventional universities but without obligatory attendance, so as to meet the needs and individual circumstances of each student," Salah said.

Officials, businessmen review industrial investment climate

AMMAN (J.T.) — A workshop on investment opportunities with reference to small and medium scale enterprises in Jordan's industry was concluded at Royal Scientific Society (RSS) Wednesday. The workshop, aimed at introducing participants to investment opportunities in Jordan's industrial sector, included scientific lectures and discussion of working papers.

The director of studies and encouragement of investment, Dr. Samir 'Amash, explained investment situation in Jordan's

industrial sector and the industrial sector's achievement and obstacles, and investment encouragement law incentives.

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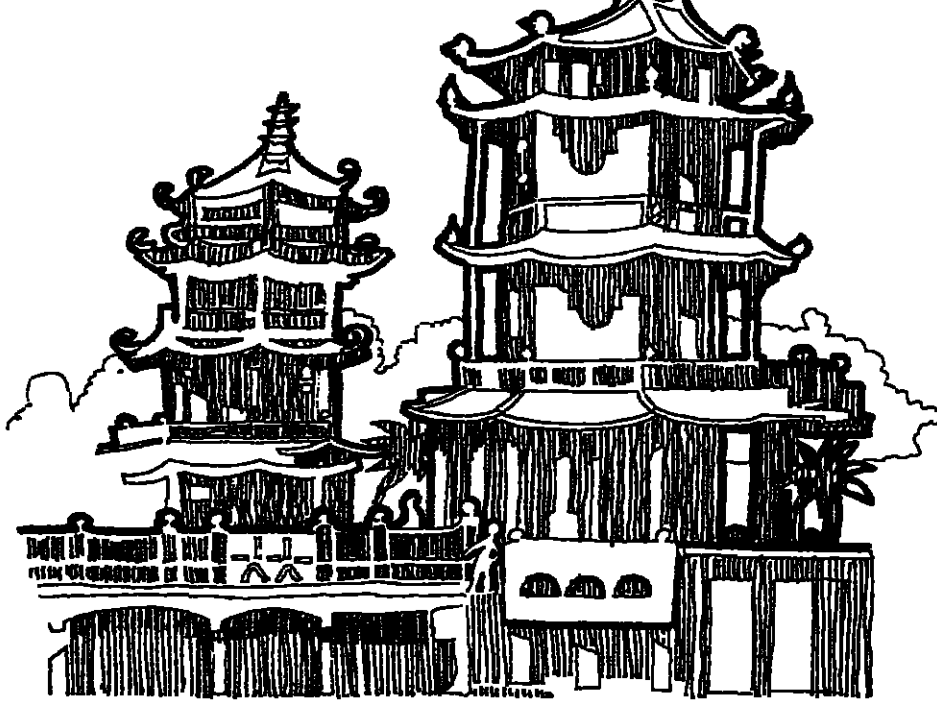
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"Happy Chinese New Year!"



Just when you thought the New Year festivities were over, here comes another new year! Come and celebrate the beginning of the Chinese Year of the Horse with our lavish Chinese buffet... Delicious stir fry dishes prepared as you choose them and many mouth-watering Chinese specialties.

The Chinese year 4688 will be celebrated on January 27th, 1990 at Al Mansaf Restaurant.

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WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An exhibition entitled "They chose 30 poets" at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ An art exhibition by Mohammad Al Jalous at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ A photographic exhibition at the Soviet Cultural Centre.

FILMS

- ★ A feature film entitled "La bambie" at the American Centre — 7:00 p.m.
- ★ A Soviet film entitled "The exceptional train" at the Soviet Cultural Centre — 6:00 p.m.

Jordan Times

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Snuff out the Soviet fire before it spreads

THE AZERBAIJANI-Armenian armed conflict that turned into an Azerbaijani-Moscow military and political conflict contains the seeds of a much wider civil war in the Soviet Union that could tear the entire country apart. As is usually the case, civil wars are among the most terrible of all wars and their toll in human and material terms sometimes parallels the death and destruction of traditional warfare between any two countries. What makes the prospects of an expanded civil strife in the Soviet Union even more ominous and catastrophic is the revelation that Soviet weaponry of the most sophisticated kind is spread all over the huge country and the potential of one nationality or another to seize control over such weapons to use against another nationality or ethnic group spells even bigger disasters for the Soviet Union. That is why it is in the interest of all mankind to help Moscow deal effectively and decisively with the burgeoning civil disorder within its borders on rational and equitable basis.

Meanwhile, all sides that fan the armed civil conflict raging now in the Soviet Union deserve to be condemned by the international community because they are in fact playing with fire and destruction the consequences of which are too cataclysmic to be forecast at this early stage. The world has already seen how Iran and Israel are exploiting the raging fire in the Soviet Union. At a time when Iran is calling on Azerbaijanis to break away from the Soviet Union by military means, Israel is caught exploiting the growing civil strife in the southern part of the Soviet Union to precipitate a Jewish stampede to Israel. Both countries are in effect beating the drums of panic in and around the Soviet Union to realise self-centred interests even if that entails causing untold bloodbaths in the country.

This is not to suggest that Moscow may not pursue political and peaceful means to restructure its relations with the various republics that comprise the Soviet Union. As a matter of fact, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika and glasnost policies need to be extended as a matter of highest priority to redefine the relationships among the various Soviet republics on contemporary and meaningful basis that could usher in a new era in the inter-Soviet relations. Yet, one can sympathise with Moscow and with the fact that it is now a beleaguered capital that has more than it can chew. This is then the time for all countries of goodwill to come to the rescue of the Soviet Union from its wounds in the most resolute way possible. This is obviously not the time to rejoice over the Soviet difficulties but rather the occasion for mankind to help the people in distress.

The first order of business therefore is to stop the bloodletting in the Soviet Union and start the process of dialogue and negotiation between the fighting factions there. What Moscow is already doing in that direction is sound and correct and deserves understanding from the international community.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Wednesday dwelt again on the emigration of Jews to occupied Palestine, and said that it is regrettable that the Arabs have not yet realised the dimension of the dangers inherent in this emigration. Except for the Jordanians and the Palestinians, no other Arabs have been showing a real concern over this issue which poses a real threat to the Arab Nation's existence. The Jordanians and the Palestinians have been crying out for collective Arab action to counter Israel's plans and to foil the Jewish state's ambitious designs, the paper said. The emigration of Jews to Palestine in big numbers is tantamount to the declaration of war on Palestine and on Jordan directly, and also indirectly on the rest of the Arab World, the paper continued. Israel's bragging about its desire to achieve peace with the Arabs is countered here by its own actions and its endeavours to gather as many Jews as possible for the only purpose of launching aggression on the Arab countries, the paper stressed. However, the paper said, it is still hoped that the Arab leaders will get together and unify their plans and pool their efforts for the sake of fending off this ominous danger and this serious onslaught on their nation.

A columnist writing in Al Ra'i Arabic daily says that the Arabs like other nations, cannot stop the torrential changes now going on in Eastern European countries and the upheavals here and there, but can use their common sense in dealing with the outcome of such change. Faded Al Faneek notes that the Arabs should concern themselves with two important aspects related to Eastern Europe: One political and the other economic. He says that Arab countries cannot ask the new leaders, many of whom are Jews to stop Jewish people from their countries to emigrate, because this is unfeasible especially as the new leaders cannot allow that to happen. What the Arabs can do is to prevent Israel from building bridges of friendship with the Eastern Europeans at the Arab Nation's expense, Faneek says. The writer also notes that the Arabs should bolster their economic ties with the East as well as the West European countries which, he says, could be turning their attention to Eastern Europe flooding it with economic assistance. Furthermore, he says, should the West help Romania and Russia to develop their oil potentials, then the Arab World's oil will be secondary in importance to the West. What the Arabs need, he says, is collective action and unity in the face of the common dangers.

Al Faneek Arabic daily commented Wednesday on the meetings of the Maghreb union, grouping Arab countries in North Africa. It said that the meetings which have just ended, coincided with preparations for holding a summit meeting for the four-member Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) leaders in Amman, and at a time when the Arab Nation is in dire need of collective action politically and economically in the face of the common challenges. The paper said that the creation of the three economic groupings in the Arab World came as a temporary alternative to pan-Arab unity; and one normally expects very positive outcome from any unity that aims to serve national interests. The paper expressed hope that such trend will finally lead to the aspired Arab unity that can bring further strength to the Arab World.

Anti-Zionism does not equal anti-Semitism

By Paul Harper

AS the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip runs into its third year, critics of Israeli policy continue to find this criticism turned back upon them. They are accused by Zionists of being anti-Semitic. Equation of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism by Israel's supporters has probably been the single greatest obstacle to popular support for the Palestinian cause in the West.

Some definition of terms is required. "Semitic" is a racial designation of doubtful historical accuracy for the descendants of Shem, the prophet Noah's son. It was coined to describe those Middle Eastern peoples, Phoenicians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Jews, Arabs and others, whose linguistic origins were clearly homogeneous and distinct from others in the area such as the Berbers of North Africa, who were conveniently ascribed to Noah's other son Ham and termed the Hamitic races. In Europe, Semite became synonymous with Jewish, if only for the reason that there were no non-Jewish Semites in Europe until quite recent times.

Unfortunately, racial prejudice against Arabs has yet to acquire the odious undertones of the term anti-Semitism as applied to anti-Jewish racism. In France, the National Front of Jean-Marie Le Pen has been able to make race a key issue in recent elections by its unashamedly racist campaign against France's Arab immigrants. It is ironic that Jewish watchdog organisations in Europe, who take admirable pains to monitor and publicise every hint of anti-Jewish neo-Nazism, seem almost oblivious to this evidence of a rising tide of "anti-Semitism" in France, "anti-Semitism" in the classic Hitlerian sense of exploitation of a nation's xenophobic fears of a racial, cultural and economic threat from within. By not redefining the terms and substituting anti-Jewish for anti-Semitic nonsense is made of the argument that anti-Zionism is a form of anti-Semitism. Even in this revised form, it runs up against the immediate obstacle of those Jews who are themselves anti-Zionists. Though a minority, they are vocal and seem to be growing in number. They range across the ideological spectrum, from the

fanatically religious Neturai Kart sect in Jerusalem, to usually isolated individuals on the left. Against them, Zionist polemic divides into two streams, what may be called its fanatical hard-liners and its more rational proponents.

The hard-line argument

The hard-liners insist that anti-Zionism must by definition be anti-Jewish because Zionism is an intrinsic part of Jewishness. It follows necessarily that anti-Zionist Jews are nevertheless anti-Jewish, and so the rather improbable category of "self-haters" was coined. This analytical argument, with its psychological corollary, seems to me a very obvious logical fallacy that has escaped exposure only because of the fuzziness surrounding Zionism in the public mind. But whatever else Zionism may be, it is a system of beliefs acquired by an act of mind: to lump it together with naturally inherited attributes such as having red hair or being Jewish is clearly false. Were it not so, anti-communism could mean anti-Slav racism, anti-apartheid anti-Afrikaaner racism, and

so on. Of course, what does constitute Zionism is central to the whole debate, is it the exercise of a fundamental political right, that of the Jewish people to self-determination and nationhood? Or is it the pious expression of a basic tenet of the Jewish faith? One does not need to have studied either Jewish history or the Bible to realise that were it simply either, then denying it would indeed be anti-Jewish. The objections must arise, I believe, not over the principles of Zionism but the practice; just as critics of communism might denounce Stalin's dictatorship or the invasion of Afghanistan but not, necessarily, the writings of Marx, Engels or Lenin.

More rational Zionists, while conceding the legitimacy of anti-Zionism per se, will still argue that anti-Jewish racism nevertheless exploits it as a respectable cover for their sinister machinations. No logical refutation for this argument exists, nor for any other couched in the same form, and of course this does happen. But this is the realm of common sense, not of logic, and a few

simple tests should establish the sincerity or otherwise of the professed anti-Zionist. Does his or her stance arise from anything other than concern for the human, political, and religious rights of the victims of Zionism? Is it consistent with his or her stance on other such issues around the world? Is he or she opposed to all forms of racism against whoever it is directed? Clearly, to slander those outraged by Israel's repression in the occupied territories, for example, as anti-Jewish suggests nothing more than that Zionism is indeed morally bankrupt.

Zionism and Palestinian rights

Switching to the other side of the debate, there are those who argue that Zionism is a *practi* form of racism because of its principle of establishing an exclusively Jewish state. There is a danger here of getting lost in a labyrinthine academic argument and losing sight of the real issue: does Zionism necessarily entail the denial of other people's fundamental rights? This seems to be

the philosophical heart of the issue. No one's rights can be upheld at the expense of someone else's, and "rights" so exercised are not rights at all. It cannot be disputed today that Zionism in practice has meant "at one time or another the denial and violation of every right conceivably due to another people, the Palestinians. This is the sole and simple reason why the U.N. General Assembly has denounced it as racism."

Whether Zionism can yet coexist with Palestinian rights remains to be seen. The Zionist-Palestinian conflict is over a century old. The world knows a solution will not be simple: one state, two states, federation, confederation or an entirely original political formula. That is for those who have to live with it to decide. The PLO is on record as having accepted most of these possibilities, but most importantly, as having accepted the principle of the equality of rights of Jews and Palestinians in geographical Palestine. If Zionism wishes to shed its racist label it should make a start by doing the same. — Middle East International, London.

Algeria — pressing economic problems

By Jonathan Clayton
Renter

ALGIERS — Algeria's taxi-drivers all share the same nightmare — a minor bump that could put them out of business for months. With spare parts so hard to obtain, battered old taxis apparently held together by string, wire and tape are commonplace in this once strictly socialist state now pursuing economic and political reforms.

"We have to make do as best we can," said Mohammed Djouf, who works in the capital, Algiers. His brother-in-law Hacene has been out of work for months since his Peugeot 505 broke down for lack of proper servicing.

Obtaining such items as windscreen wipers, windows, door handles or spark plugs requires skills more normally associated with the country's high reputation as one of the world's great diplomatic mediators.

"It is just not good business driving a taxi people have diffi-

culty getting in and out of," joked Mohammed.

The daily problems faced by Algerian taxi-drivers highlight the enormity of the government's declared aim — trying to inject market forces into a centrally-planned economy.

Shortages are common in Algeria. Returning emigrant workers can often be seen at Algiers airport loaded down with bags of bananas — so rare they are considered a luxury — and other goods ranging from coffee to spare tyres.

Consequently, a thriving black market has grown up. It is not uncommon for foreigners to be offered five to six times the official rate to change hard currency.

The government is trying to make the economy, based almost entirely on oil and gas revenues, more efficient by injecting market forces to stimulate productivity. But the accompanying political reforms are complicating its task.

Since President Chadli Ben-

jedid accelerated the reform programme after bloody anti-austerity youth riots in October 1988, Algeria has become one of the Arab World's most liberal countries.

A new constitution adopted by referendum in February 1989 guaranteed freedom of expression and assembly, the right to strike and the right to form political parties.

Newly-created political parties — ranging from Muslim fundamentalists to free-enterprise liberals — vie for popularity ahead of promised elections while workers demand better pay and conditions.

Tax collectors, jewellers, steel workers, junior doctors in hospitals and students recently went on strike in various parts of the country.

Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche said on television last week the reforms had run into trouble and urged workers to show more discipline and refrain from industrial action.

"These strikes are damaging the workers and the country. They are prolonging the critical period of three years we need to get out of this crisis," he said, accusing opponents of reform of plotting to undermine a nascent democracy.

Algeria's current economic problems stem from the 1980s' oil price collapse which forced drastic cuts in imports and an austerity drive.

Some 95 per cent of all Algeria's foreign currency earnings come from oil and gas exports. To wean the economy off this dependency, economic reforms are designed to allow more competition.

Most independent analysts agree the economic outlook is unlikely to improve for some time and could get worse in the short term.

"What you have here today is a lot of political freedom and an economic mess and a population increasingly reluctant to put up with hardship," a Western diplomat said.

Israel stifles Arab labour

By Ali Dajani

The following article is an address made by Ali Dajani, advisor to the Amman Chamber of Industry, to an ILO fact-finding mission that visited Jordan last week.

THE Arab Employers' Organisations' in the Israeli-occupied territories are 'deadly paralysed'. The chambers of commerce have not had any elections since 1967, because the Israeli authorities ignore the Israeli Chambers of Commerce Law No. 41 for 1949. They refuse to enforce the stipulated requirements that all business establishments should first register at the chamber before obtaining or renewing their annual trade licences. Consequently, the chambers' revenues have dwindled to the brink of bankruptcy, and they subsist on meagre fees and voluntary subscriptions which hardly meet their sustenance requirements. The chambers' members are not allowed to hold annual meetings, and if they do, it is under the threat of either being disbanded, or the office-holders suffer detention.

Employers suffer from the arbitrary enforcement by the Israeli authorities of occupation of the British defence (emergency) regulations of 1945. These regulations allow such measures as house demolition, deportation and detention without trial, in flagrant violation of the Geneva Convention and the 1907 Hague Regulations which forbid house demolition, forcible deportation and detention without trial. These regulations as kept in force, violate human rights and freedoms and indeed, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The same constraints imposed on the chambers of commerce are applied to the engineering, medical and advocates' unions and others.

The British defence (emergency) regulations were in fact revoked by the Jordanian government, but the Israeli authorities, brought them back to life for ulterior motives and to perpetuate the occupation and frighten away the Palestinian population. Employers are not allowed to attend any Arab commercial or industrial seminar or conference. This rule applies more rigidly to the employees in Arab Jerusalem, who contrary to all international conventions are denied of this freedom and right of attending Arab economic meetings under the threat of revoking their Israeli re-entry permits. It is to be mentioned, in this respect, that Israeli permits to visit Jordan, or permits for anyone to visit the occupied areas cost something like JD 80 per person. This un-

reasonable fee divests persons of the little money they have. The frequent imposition of curfew orders is now a matter of routine. There are almost daily orders to confine thousands of people to their homes, and away from their occupations, businesses, factories and farms for days. Count of such orders has been lost.

The sufferings of the inhabitants of Beit Sahur are too well-known to be re-counted. Shops, pharmacies, workshops and factories were divested of their contents. Even small machines for small businesses or women-work at home were mercilessly confiscated.

Measures of repression meted out to employers are as harsh and oppressive as the measures inflicted on the Palestinian population as a whole. Unfortunately, no separate figures are available about employers under detention.

The Israeli authorities are throwing all the Palestinian Arabs down the line of poverty, as a means to impoverish and drive them to surrender their national rights. The Israeli employers and unions are accomplices in their rulers' oppressions. They never raised a word of sympathy or protest against their authorities. They stand blind and

indifferent eye-witnesses to the excesses committed, unworthy and unfit of sitting with employers in international fora.

The excesses and violations are long to relate within a short space of time. There is no need to say that the economy of the Palestinians is being ferociously ravaged by the occupation, while the economic ties with the Arab countries are continuously disrupted.

The stand taken by the EEC to import citrus fruits from the Arab producers directly, is highly appreciated, but Israel harnesses this operation by delays and lengthy searches, sometimes until the consignments rot. This is in line with their deliberate policy to deny the Arab population any prospects of income.

Finally, the Amman Chamber of Industry highly values the onerous, but human task of your mission, and wishes to convey through you its appreciation to the director general, his staff concerned and the governing body. We have no doubt your report will be explicit and courageous, as you are undertaking a human mission not only to report sufferings and violations of basic freedoms of unions, but also to call for urgent deterrent actions against these incessant violations of the human and legitimate national rights of the Palestinian Arabs.

French to drop their opposition because unification is coming faster than any of them think," said one European diplomat in Washington.

The State Department official said it appeared important at the moment that governments did since events were being decided on the streets of East Germany.

"The problem is that the direction and pace of events is not being decided by position papers in chancelleries and ministries but by popular emotions in East Germany," he said.

In his latest move to keep his nine-week-old government afloat, Modrow appealed to opposition parties to join in a coalition to steer the country to elections.

This is also the direction Washington is urging. It has told Modrow through diplomatic channels that the United States' willingness to work with and support him was directly connected to his showing a commitment to democratic government and reform.

U.S. afraid E. German collapse could lead to rush for unity

By Alan Elsner
Renter

WASHINGTON — The United States is growing increasingly nervous that a collapse of Communist authority in East Germany could lead to a headlong rush for German unification, officials say. Barely a month after Secretary of State James Baker made an unprecedented trip to East Germany to boost the standing of Prime Minister Hans Modrow, Bush administration officials said they were bitterly disappointed with Modrow's subsequent performance.

His abortive attempt to reorganise the hated Stasi secret police had destroyed much of his credibility with East Germans, officials said.

"The Modrow government has screwed up and has been gravely weakened by the Stasi fiasco. Its ability to govern is under a lot of doubt," said one State Department official.

The big fear in Washington is that the Modrow government could collapse before elections

scheduled for May 6 and the result could be a mass demand for speedy unification with West Germany.

"We just don't know yet whether the damage is so bad that the government will be unable to survive until the May 6 elections, or whether it has lost so much credibility it can't effectively organise an election process," the official said.

The United States is hoping that an East German government with a clear mandate and programme emerges from the polls.

"If it doesn't, one possibility could be a very powerful groundswell for immediate unification. That could even come sooner if the breakdown of the Communists is so catastrophic that you get that before May," the official said.

Another possibility which fills Washington with anxiety would be a flood of emigration on a hitherto unprecedented scale to a West Germany already straining to absorb the hundreds of thousands of East Germans who fled across the border last year.

The United States supports unification in principle but says it must be carried out gradually and peacefully in the context of international agreement and that the emerging state must be tied to the West.

But other key allies like Britain and France, while adhering to this programme in public, are privately unenthusiastic about the prospect of a big united Germany emerging as a dominant economic and political force in Europe.

"Washington's key role is to persuade the British and the

LETTERS

Freedom of choice

To the Editor:

YOUR issue of January 21 carried the news of the recent government decision to ban serving alcoholic beverages at official functions, and the plan to stop serving liquor on Royal Jordanian flights to the Arab World.

In fact, on January 20, the same news item was carried by several radio stations in West Europe. I am not concerned with the wisdom, or lack of it, of such decisions. But I cannot help feel that they are a clear indication that the new government of Prime Minister Badran had agreed to appease some members of Parliament in its efforts to secure the confidence vote, despite vehement denial of such an arrangement during the few weeks since the vote. Are these measures isolated, or are more concessions on the way?

My concern is with Royal Jordanian. This "National Pride" has, over the last 20 years, strived to exist in a world market that has witnessed airlines practically going overboard in providing outstanding service to attract passengers. What one must not forget is that Royal Jordanian caters to a multitude of nationalities. Serving liquor on board is one of the amenities that passengers have come to expect from airlines. Foreign carriers serving many Arab airports do not have this handicap. Why put Royal Jordanian at a disadvantage when it is going through a most critical phase of its existence? It is not as if the airline will force passengers to consume alcohol on board. Those who wish to abstain can certainly do so.

After all, I thought democracy stands for, among other things, the freedom of choice.

Claire de la Plante

Driving backwards?

To the Editor,

DURING my readings on "Privatisation" I came across a doggerel entitled "The Politician" by Ogden Nash.

It goes like this:

He gains votes ever and anew
By taking money from every body and giving it to a few,
While explaining that every Penny
Was extracted from the few to be given to the many.

This is then how the voters are being continuously deceived, and this is why "privatisation" is claimed to redress this wrong. Now almost all the world without exception has either initiated privatisation programme or moved towards it. The highly industrialised Western countries, the developing world and even the Communists closed economies have taken some steps in the same direction, albeit in varying degree.

Why then we, in Jordan, are actually doing the reverse? Why do we talk, attend seminars, bring consultants and vocally declare our support for privatisation and then act in the opposite direction making bigger government?

Why are we driving backwards?

M. Abu Saad
Amman

Open your hearts!

To the Editor:

A concert by the Amman City Orchestra will be held this evening at the Royal Cultural Centre. The Amman Orchestra will be accompanied by 25 members of the Armed Forces Symphony orchestra. What feelings does such an event incur? excitement? scepticism? criticism? One can rest assured that both parties have and are still working hard to attain the perfection that you and I are seeking. But that cannot be achieved overnight.

"Practice makes master" is true, but what is even truer is that musicians need to perform in order to learn. A performance puts a deadline (time limit). A performance is an incentive to do better than usual. It puts greater stress on perfecting coordination and time keeping. A performance allows an opportunity for self-evaluation. And, of course, brings in the constructive criticism of the few professionals that would attend.

Let us then attend this performance with an open spirit, willing to encourage rather than criticise. Let us put our egos and our boasting about our knowledge of good music aside, and listen to the "right" music they have chosen for us to enjoy. Everyone started somewhere. No one started at the top.

Good luck to the performers!

Nelly Lama

Frivolity too

To the Editor:

IN writing this I may be criticised for only wanting to see my name in print, but I am afraid that I must disagree with Haya Hussein's letter to the editor when she attacked the Jordan Times for printing frivolous articles. On the contrary, the Jordan Times follows the best journalistic tradition when printing columns such as the Open Forum. All major newspapers world wide have their share of frivolity and satire. Many of these authors are sought out and syndicated in newspapers throughout the world, one of the best examples being the famous (infamous?) columnist Art Buchwald.

I would think, particularly at this time, when so much of the local and world news is depressing, most readers welcome a bit of nonsense. After reading about Israeli oppression, the kidnapping in Lebanon, civil war in the Soviet Union, Iran's human rights behaviour, and so on, I need to have something to laugh about. My suggestion is, those who find certain columns undesirable, don't read them. Please though, leave them for those of us who enjoy a bit of frivolity along with the more serious (depressing) news.

Karen Asfour

Water resources in the Middle East region are increasingly becoming scarce. In the following article, **Mariam M. Shalabi** reports on the dispute between

Iraq and Syria on the one hand and Turkey on the other over the latter's decision to reduce the flow of the waters of the Euphrates River for one month.

Turkey, Syria, Iraq — haggling over Euphrates

AMMAN — At a time when the international community is pooling efforts to harness natural resources one of the Middle East's most essential resources, water, may be becoming a monopoly in the hands of a few countries in the region.

Turkey's one-month cut-down in the flow of the Euphrates River to Syria and Iraq starting 11 days ago has once again highlighted the absence of regional agreements on water sharing.

While officials in Ankara and a special Turkish delegation visiting the Arab World have attempted to "calm fears" and "correct rumours" that Turkey plans to starve its southern neighbours of water, the governments of Syria and Iraq as well as the Arab League have made several official protests over the issue.

Syria and Iraq apparently were informed of Turkey's plan to reduce the flow of the Euphrates for one month. Both countries had officially called on Ankara to reduce the period of the cutback to 10 days or two weeks, pointing out that their agriculture and hydro-power plants would be adversely affected and that millions of people would suffer as a result.

In an article published by the Baghdad daily, Al Thawra, Jan. 12, Iraq called for a tripartite agreement that would regulate the usage of the Euphrates among the three countries.

Syria and Iraq have been pursuing such an agreement for over 10 years, but Turkey, while not outrightly rejecting the proposal, has consistently "evaded" the issue, according to Dr. Elias Salameh, professor of hydrology and director of the Water Research and Study Centre at the University of Jordan.

During the expected one-month cut-back Syria and Iraq will receive less water from the tributaries of the Euphrates, estimated at one fourth of the regular flow of 500 cubic metres per second.

A Turkish delegation visited Amman last week said that consultations had been taking place since last November between Turkish officials and their Syrian and Iraqi counterparts.

At the time, a Foreign Ministry spokesman in Ankara was

quoted as saying: "They (Syria and Iraq) don't have any objections and they can't object" to the plan under international law.

From Nov. 23, Turkey increased the water flow to Syria to 750 cubic metres a second so Syria and Iraq could "stockpile" supplies ahead of the cut-back in January.

Approximately 88 per cent of the mean annual flow of the Euphrates waters is generated within Turkey and almost all of the remaining 12 per cent within Syria.

Syria, which is more dependent on the Euphrates than Iraq, could control downstream flow of the river to Iraq. It is building more dams to utilize the river to the fullest. Syria's agricultural sector and hydro-electric power plants are largely dependent on the Euphrates River.

'Political reasons'

The Turkish delegation visiting Amman last week emphasized that the cutback had no political reasons.

The statements made by Turkish President Turgut Ozal during the last three months indicate otherwise, according to observers. Referring to border attacks mounted by Kurdish rebels based in Syrian territory or Syrian-controlled Lebanon, demanding autonomy for Turkey's estimated eight million Kurds, Ozal said: "Of course the water will be supplied (to Syria) as long as there is enough and as long as Syria abides by certain terms... we have doubts that Syria is abiding by these terms."

Reuters news agency quoted a Turkey Foreign Ministry source saying that water supply to Syria was linked "implicitly" with action by Damascus to prevent cross border raids by rebels of the Marxist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK).

Syria had agreed under a security protocol signed when Ozal was prime minister in 1987 to keep movements by Kurdish rebels under check.

The Ataturk dam is one of 21 to be built in southeastern Turkey by the year 2001 under a \$11 billion programme aimed mainly at raising living standards in an economically backward area. According to Turkish officials, the area is inhabited largely by the country's

Kurdish community. The officials asserted that improving the largely impoverished Kurds' living standards by building an agricultural and industrial infrastructure was Ankara's way of dealing with the "regional unrest."

Kurdish rebels say they are fighting for autonomy from Turkey and have accused Ankara of destroying the local agricultural infrastructure with its plans to industrialise the region.

Long-term effects

Syria faces large and mounting water shortages in part because of drought and in part because of "man-made" obstacles. Some experts, including Dr. Salameh, estimate that Turkey's project to irrigate its southeastern provinces could reduce annual Euphrates flow into Iraq by two thirds once the project is completed.

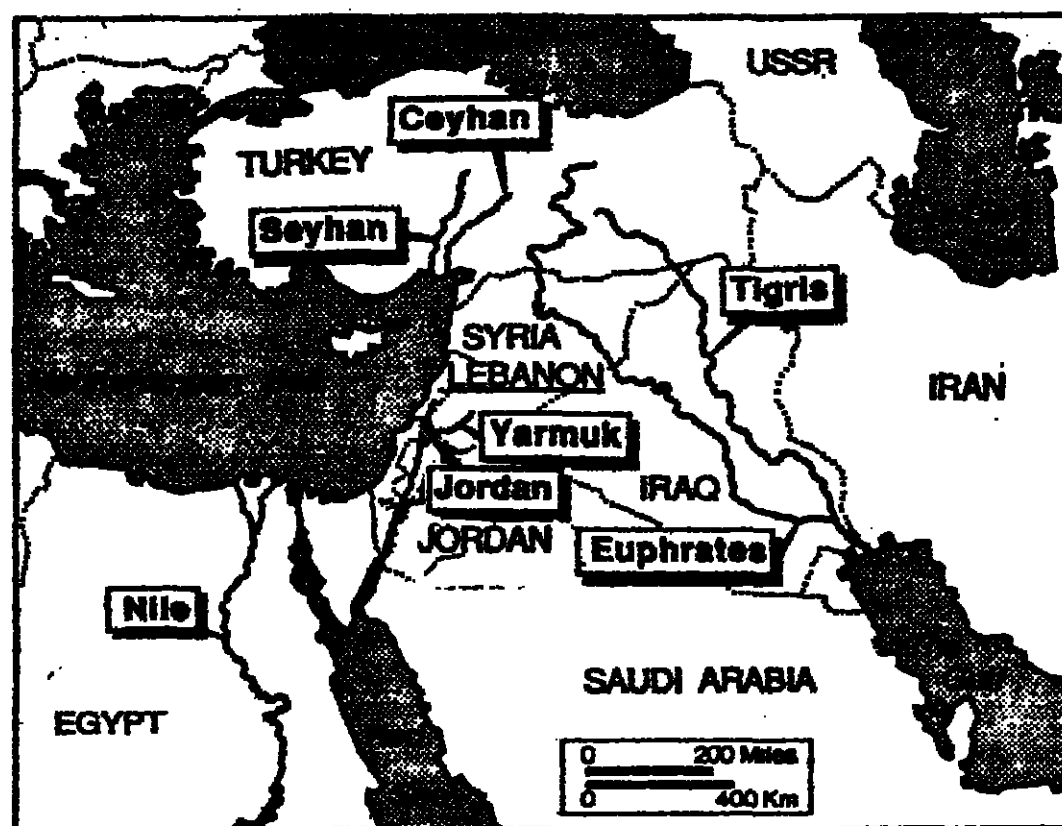
Iraqi sources say that it would take four to five years at best to fill the Ataturk dam alone if rain fall is above average and up to eight years if rainfall is below average. The implication of long-term plans to utilize the Euphrates waters for filling the Ataturk dam could thus be much greater than seems evident from the one-month long cut-down on the water flow.

At present four-fifths of Iraq's water originates from outside its borders, mainly from the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers. Baghdad threatened military action in 1975 and 1984 as tensions rose with Damascus over the sharing of the Euphrates waters when Iraq accused Syria of seeking to use its dams to hold back water flows into Iraq.

Jordanian experts estimate that if Turkey and Syria implement all their development plans, the amount of water entering Iraq from the Euphrates could be reduced from 30 billion cubic metres to 11 billion cubic metres. This would be two billion cubic metres less than Iraq claims will be a minimum requirement for its agricultural projects.

Historical aspects

Iraq's use of the Euphrates for irrigation purposes dates back to 6,000 years. It was also the first of the three states to build modern water works on the river. Turkey and Syria



launched plans to utilise the Euphrates much later.

Plans to achieve flood control began earlier this century by the three countries. Although technical consultations among the three have taken place since the 1960s, planning has taken place mostly on a country by country basis.

At present a joint Syrian-Turkish-Iraqi technical committee is entrusted with consultations.

Legal aspects

The first international treaty regarding usage of waters signed in Geneva in 1923 by the League of Nations said that states must consult each other in case any construction would effect the flow of water across borders. It also said that negotiations must take place in case a country suffered adverse effects from such construction.

However, the treaty and others that followed seem not to have effected the old concept that states have full sovereignty over international waters passing through their territory regardless of the rights of other.

A conference on the water resources in the Arab World and their strategic importance held in Amman last April concluded that "international laws that regulate riparian rights are not adequate. What gives the right to a country in using a certain portion of a water resource is only historical norms and conventions. Also, the highest internationally acceptable abiding rules in exploiting a certain water resource between neighbouring countries are those based on mutual agreements. However, there is no international organisation that can implement such agreements."

Participants in that recommended that: "Arab countries

should strongly and urgently seek the drawing up of agreements with friendly non-Arab countries concerning the riparian rights of common water resources. Justice, norms and historical usage of the water resource should be the basis of such agreements."

The only known agreement which exists at present is a protocol signed by Turkey and Syria in 1978, in which Turkey promised to release 500 cubic metres per second to the Syrian side of the border.

In April 1975, an accident at a new dam project in Syria reportedly reduced the Euphrates flow from Syria into Iraq by 80 per cent. This endangered the livelihood of three million Iraqi farmers and caused a massing of troops on both sides of the Iraqi-Syrian border.

An annual publication entitled "Water in the Middle East Conflict or Cooperation" published by the University of Pennsylvania said that Iraqi officials, albeit in private, admitted that after the Saudi Arabian government mediated between Baghdad and Damascus that "an understanding was reached with Syria to apportion 60 per cent of the Euphrates waters to Iraq and 40 per cent to Syria."

Financing

Although Turkish officials said in Amman last week that the Ataturk dam was built solely from the funds of the Turkish government budget, some Arab sources insist that "Arab and Islamic funds financed a great deal 'of the project'."

While the significance of such external funding, provided the assertion is correct, remains open for interpretation, Arab water experts seemed to refer to the Ataturk and possibly other projects at the water con-

ference last April. One of the final recommendations requested Arab funds "not to support development projects in non-Arab countries sharing water resources with Arab countries without drawing up of agreements concerning the riparian rights of the countries involved."

Dr. Salameh believes that "water is the single most important issue in the Arab World today. It is detrimental to our survival and water issues have to be addressed now and solutions have to be found 'yesterday'."

If we consider the future water needs of Turkey, Syria, and Iraq and which are increasing every year, it is unlikely that some sort of confrontation will not take place if water sharing agreements are not made and implemented in the near future."

Women's chest pain may signal artery disorder

By Paul Raelburn
The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Tens of thousands of women in the United States diagnosed each year with chest pain and no signs of heart disease may be suffering from a treatable disorder of the small arteries, a researcher said recently.

Many of these women, who often experience intense pain, are being treated for psychiatric disorders because no physical symptoms can be found with conventional tests, said Dr. Richard Cannon of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute in Bethesda, Maryland.

"Many have been mislabeled as neurotic or hysterical women," Cannon said. "They truly have a pain syndrome."

Among their symptoms is a condition Cannon calls "sensitive heart," in which they experience sharp pain when test probes are threaded into arteries near their hearts.

Ordinarily such probes produce no pain, Cannon said. He described his research at the American Heart Association's annual science writers' forum.

His studies have shown that many of the patients are suffering from a disorder he calls microvascular angina, in which blood flow may be blocked in very tiny arteries that nourish the heart.

The arteries are too small to show up on angiograms, in which dye is injected into the larger coronary arteries to look for blockages, he said. The condition has sometimes been called "Syndrome X," because its cause was unknown.

Cannon said that about 100,000 people in the United States each

year have "chest pain, or angina, with no evidence of blockage of the coronary arteries. Most are women."

The condition may be common in men, too, but it occurs in middle age and later when many men already have developed coronary artery blockages. Those blockages hide underlying microvascular angina, Cannon said.

A variety of treatments exist to relieve the pain, Cannon said. The treatments include many of the standard heart drugs.

The patients are identified in part because they have reduced flow of blood to the heart, Cannon said.

Studies have shown that the patients appear to have a disorder of the so-called "smooth muscle" in arteries. The smooth muscle causes arteries to tighten and relax as they help regulate blood pressure and blood flow.

The patients are unusually sensitive to drugs that constrict the blood vessels, and somewhat insensitive to drugs that relax blood vessels, Cannon said.

They also commonly have disorders of the esophagus and an asthmatic condition in the bronchial tubes.

The disorder could be caused by some defect in the smooth muscle itself, or it could be a problem in the portions of the brain and nervous system that regulate the contraction and relaxation of smooth muscle, Cannon said.

Although microvascular angina is not a psychiatric condition, some psychiatric drugs appear to relieve the chest pain, perhaps because they alleviate a disorder in the nervous system's regulation of the smooth muscle, Cannon said.

Latest in electronic gear: 3-metre \$10,000 TV

By Robert Macy
The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — There was a video game controller the player doesn't even need to touch. There was hand-held copier and telephone-facsimile unit that can send and receive transmissions from cellular phones. There was even a TV screen measuring 10, 3 metres from corner to corner.

Industry officials predict more than \$10 billion in orders will result from the winter consumer electronics show, which closed last week after displaying what's hot in electronic gadgetry for the 1990s.

Thousands of products captured the imagination of the more than 70,000 manufacturers, dealers and journalists who visited the four-day show.

"The mood for 1990 is very upbeat," show spokeswoman Cynthia Upson said. "These retailers just came off the Christmas selling season. Many were here looking into what's new for a new decade. Retailers say they expect a nice volume for the spring selling season. When you hear that, you know you've had a successful show."

Show officials say the winter electronics show and its summer counterpart, which will be held in Chicago, stimulate orders totaling more than half of the consumer electronics industry's sales.

Factory sales for the industry are expected to reach a record \$33.412 billion in 1990, up from \$32.166 billion in 1989.

The major players at the show were big ticket items such as home entertainment advances — giant video and surround-sound audio — that turn a living room into a home theatre. Also displayed were digital sound systems that give a car or home the sound of a concert hall or cathedral.

Mitsubishi introduced a rear-projection TV with a 120-inch (3-metre) screen. The cost: \$20,000.

New home automation devices

allow a person away from home turn on the dishwasher, lock doors, set alarms, programme the VCR or turn on the air conditioner, all by telephone.

But smaller electronic gadgets continued to capture the imagination of visitors to the show, which is considered a fantasy land for adults.

Broderbund Software unveiled a video game controller that says eliminates all physical con-

tact between player and machine. Instead of a joystick or button, the player uses hand movement to produce a response. In the "Mike Tyson's Punch-out" game, for example, throw a left jab at the air and you throw a left jab at a video version of the opponent.

Panasonic Technics offered a car radio that owners can programme for their favourite type of music. The radio picks up the top station in the selected category as

the driver moves from city to city. Franklin Computer and Selectronic introduced hand-held computers that seek out bible verses with the touch of a button. Franklin also displayed a tiny computer that provides definitions, spelling and grammatical guidelines for more than 250,000 words in Spanish and English.

Pop singer Michael Jackson gets into the act with a new video game by Sega dubbed "Moonwalk."

The game features detailed animation based on actual film footage of Jackson's dance moves. In the game, Jackson rescues children who have been kidnapped by an evil enemy.

Ricoh offered compact products for the office on-the-go, including a hand-held copier and telephone-facsimile unit that can send and receive transmissions from modular or cellular phones.

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Jordan parliament faces harsh economic reality

AMMAN (R) — Revived democracy has given Jordanians more say in economic policy but they cannot avoid painful belt tightening, economists say.

"Can people sustain the pressure of rising prices? I'm afraid it might burst," said Fakhri Bilbeisi, a banker.

Jordan, long cushioned by Arab aid and foreign loans, began IMF-agreed reforms last April with price increases which sparked riots. Hastily-called elections, the first in 22 years, produced a parliament which is now debating a 1990 austerity budget.

Finance Minister Basel Jaradneh told Reuters he expected the House finance committee to approve, with minor changes, a budget which would cut real spending and increase tax revenue.

After years of price stability, the cost of living rose 26 per cent last year, matching the erosion of the dinar's dollar value, but Jaradneh predicted slower inflation in 1990.

"Assuming the dinar remains stable, I expect inflation of 12 or 13 per cent," he said. "If we get a good agricultural season and vegetable prices stay down, it could be in single figures."

Government employees have had no general pay rise since 1985. Private sector workers have done better, but in most cases their increments have not kept

pace with recent inflation.

Parliament, keen to root out alleged government corruption, has set up a committee to probe responsibility for the economic crisis and many deputies have complained about rising prices.

Some plan to ask the government to lift a lid of secrecy on the finances of the debt-ridden airline Royal Jordanian and to demand public scrutiny of the affairs of farm marketing boards and other state-owned agencies.

The government has pledged to ease the hardships of the poor and has allotted about \$90 million for food subsidies.

But it will have to ask Jordan's fast-growing population to swallow lower living standards while it tackles the long-ignored problems of high spending and borrowing which depleted foreign reserves and caused the dinar's collapse in October 1988.

The government says progress has been made.

Arab aid helped steady the dinar in August after it had lost two-fifths of its dollar value. The devaluation deterred imports and made exports more competitive, cutting the trade deficit by a third to \$1.15 billion from \$1.7 billion in 1988.

Remittances from Jordanians working abroad dropped to \$700 million from \$900 million the previous year, but Jaradneh told Parliament that the 1989 balance of payments was still likely to show a surplus of more than \$200 million.

Exports of phosphates, potash, and fertilisers earned Jordan \$560 million last year and the lower dinar contributed to a late surge in farm exports to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf.

Yet business confidence remains low and prospects of future Arab aid are uncertain. Officials say 20 per cent of Jordanians are unemployed, while foreigners make up half the workforce.

"The construction sector was virtually dead last year and prospects look no better for 1990," one leading contractor said.

There was little growth in the economy last year after it shrank by 3.5 per cent in 1988, but the government is hoping for expansion of about three per cent this year.

It will also seek Parliament's support for the five-year plan agreed with International Monetary Fund to reduce the budget deficit, cut consumption and boost exports.

Jordan sought IMF help last year to reschedule its foreign debt, which reached \$8.3 billion, including \$1.8 billion in undischarged loans, at the end of 1988.

Government widens outlays for meat sales

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Supply has decided to allow centres which sell imported fresh meat to also sell locally produced meat all days of the week except those days when imported fresh beef is distributed in Jordan.

A statement said the ministry would also allow these centres to sell imported frozen meat provided they acquire advance approval from the ministry. It added that an electric saw for cutting the frozen meat should be provided at the shop and the meat should be kept in refrigerators at minus 15 degrees to preserve it in good condition.

The statement warned all merchants against selling frozen meat as being fresh meat, and said violators would be prosecuted risking loss of their licences.

According to the ministry statement, the new measure, which takes effect immediately, was taken as a result of stoppage of fresh meat imports from Bulgaria and Romania except for limited consignments of fresh beef.

In a related development, Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily reported that no new deals will be made from now on for the importation of Bulgarian and Romanian meat.

The paper quoted a Ministry of Supply official as saying that there was a shortage of meat in the two European countries and the decision was taken there to stop exporting lamb and beef meat to other countries.

U.S. budget deficit exceeds target

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The federal budget deficit increased \$14.64 billion in December, meaning the deficit so far this fiscal year already has reached more than two-thirds permitted for the entire year, the Treasury Department said Tuesday.

Combined with the \$55.05 billion October-November deficit, the imbalance at the end of December totalled \$69.69 billion, compared to a \$67.58 billion deficit for the same period of fiscal 1989.

This means that although the government has a lower deficit ceiling this year, it has spent 3.1 per cent more than it did during the first three months of fiscal 1989.

The Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction law sets a \$100 billion ceiling for the fiscal year that began Oct. 1. The 1989 deficit totalled \$152.1 billion.

However, the December imbalance was 49.4 per cent lower than November's \$28.96 billion and 43.9 per cent smaller than October's \$26.09 billion.

President George Bush is scheduled to send to Congress Monday his budget for fiscal 1991 that will propose spending \$123 billion that will meet the Gramm-Rudman goal of a \$64 billion deficit that year.

Revenue last month totalled \$89.13 billion, 4.9 per cent less than received in the same month of fiscal 1989. Spending fell 1.3

per cent to \$103.77 billion. The deficit is the difference between revenue and spending.

As usual, the biggest spending categories were for the military, social security and other programmes in the Department of Health and Human Services, and interest on the national debt.

Military spending totalled \$27.76 billion in December and \$71.50 billion so far this year. It is projected to total \$286.89 billion for the entire fiscal year.

Social security payments amounted to \$19.91 billion last month and \$59.52 billion for the year. It is projected to total \$242.95 billion for the year.

Interest on the national debt totalled \$41 billion in December and \$77.66 billion for the year and is projected to total \$254.36 billion for the year.

Meanwhile, analysts awaiting the government's estimate of fourth-quarter growth on Friday say the U.S. economy slowed sharply in the final months of 1989 but should manage to avoid sliding into recession.

"The economy continues to appear near, in, or headed for some type of recession," said Allen Sinai, chief economist for the Boston Company Economic Advisors Inc., who maintains the manufacturing sector is already in a recession.

A consensus forecast of economists surveyed by Reuters foresees the gross national product (GNP) expanding at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of

0.4 per cent in the October-December fourth quarter of 1989.

GNP, the measure of all goods and services produced, grew in the third quarter at a rate of 3.0 per cent, in the second quarter by 2.5 per cent and in the first three months last year by 3.7 per cent.

Most of the usual engines of growth, from consumer spending to business investment, housing construction and exports, have slackened but not entirely stalled.

Signs of anxiety are everywhere, especially at the White House in a congressional election year where President George Bush has advocated lowering interest rates to stimulate activity.

Bush told the National Association of Homebuilders last Friday that "low and stable interest rates" were essential for a growing economy in a rare public show of political arm-twisting aimed at the Federal Reserve Board, the central U.S. bank.

The central bank manipulates credit availability through its control of money supply policies including interest rates.

From about the second quarter of 1988 through mid-1989, the bank kept short-term interest rates high to discourage inflation but since June 1989 it has eased rates down by about 1.5 percentage points.

The more optimistic analysts hope these interest-rate declines will help head off a full-scale recession, even if election-minded politicians want more reductions quickly.

"I still think, even though the risks are there, that we won't go into a classical recession in 1990 simply because if we start to do so, the (bank) will ease immediately," said Samuel Kahan, chief economist for Fuji Securities in Chicago.

The usual definition of recession is two successive quarters in which total economic output shrinks. The last U.S. recession began in mid-1981 and ended in November 1982.

Kahan said he expected fourth-quarter GNP to expand at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 0.5 per cent in the fourth quarter. He anticipates a modest rebound in growth as 1990 wears on because of the downward trend in interest rates.

A number of unusual factors hurt the national economy in the final quarter of 1989, including a 45-day strike at Boeing in October and November that probably cut \$1 billion from exports of commercial aircraft, Kahan noted.

Severe cold in December pushed up oil imports while prices for home heating oil surged.

Housing starts fell sharply in November and December and the trade deficit in November was the highest in 11 months, although economists were encouraged by the fact that auto sales rose in the final days of 1989 and industrial production gained in the two closing months.

Japan may swap market access, cash for stable oil supplies

TOKYO (R) — Japan is ready to open its huge domestic oil-products market to Middle Eastern nations and offer them cash and technology to exchange for guarantees of stable oil supplies in the 1990s, oil industry and government sources say.

Japan has recently started exchanging visits of high-level officials with Middle East countries. In the past, such visits were rare despite Japan's heavy dependence on Middle East oil.

"Both Japan and the Middle East nations are interested in developing the existing seller-buyer oil relationship into something more mutually dependent,"

said Tsutomu Toichi, chief economist at Japan's privately run Institute of Energy Economics.

Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Hisham Nazer will arrive in Tokyo Thursday as part of a trip to the Far East, which also includes visits to Indonesia and South Korea.

Nazer said in Jakarta Saturday that the trip focused on the possibility of cooperating on refining and marketing projects.

"There is no obstacle on our part to oil investments by the Gulf states," Masaji Yamamoto, director-general of Japan's Agency of Natural Resources and Energy, said this month. He vi-

sited Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in mid-January to discuss long-term crude supplies to Japan.

Oil industry sources agree that Japan has no choice but to buy more oil from the Middle East in the 1990s due to rising demand and declining supplies from some sources, such as China and Indonesia.

Japan already imports more than two thirds of its oil from Gulf nations.

"The Gulf countries can be sure they will get enough cash and technology from Japan in the 90s, particularly in the energy section," Toichi said.

A government official said Japan's largesse would mainly take the form of technical assistance and private-sector investment as the gross national products of Middle East countries exceeded the ceiling for Japan's official development aid.

Japan's Arabian Oil Company (AOC) produces crude in the Neutral Zone between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Some Japanese and Gulf industry sources predict Japan will get an extension of the AOC concession, which expires at the turn of the century, in exchange for access to its oil-product markets.

'Sudanese are rich'

KHARTOUM (AP) — The leader of Sudan's military junta says Sudanese have \$40 billion in foreign assets, enough to pay the country's national debt three times over.

In a televised speech from western Sudan, Omar Hassan Al Bashir said that if used properly, the deposits were enough "for solving the country's economic problems."

Sudan, in northeastern Africa, is the continent's largest country and one of the world's poorest.

The war has disrupted the economy so badly that hundreds of thousands of people, mostly civilians, have died largely through starvation from war-caused famine.

Failure to meet payments on its \$13 billion debt has caused the International Monetary Fund and even Arab donors to freeze new loans to Sudan.

In his speech, the junta leader blamed the country's predicament on "partisan policies" of Prime Minister Sadek Al Mahdi's civilian government, ousted in a June 30 coup.

The military government "inherited a chaotic economy" but had convinced some of the Arab donors to resume financing of projects in Sudan, because the government lacks necessary money to carry them out on its own.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Wednesday, January 24, 1989
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell		Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	666.0	662.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	449.2	453.7
Pound Sterling	1083.9	1094.7	Dutch guilder	343.7	347.1
Deutschemark	387.4	391.3	Swedish crown	106.0	107.1
Swiss franc	436.0	440.4	Italian lira (for 100)	52.1	52.6
French franc	114.0	115.1	Belgian franc (for 10)	185.0	186.9

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.6557/67	U.S. dollars	
One U.S. dollar	1.1755/65	Canadian dollar	
	1.6880/87	Deutschemark	
	1.9020/30	Dutch guilder	
	1.4950/60	Swiss franc	
	35.30/34	Belgian franc	
	5.7350/400	French franc	
	1256/1257	Italian lire	
	145.35/45	Japanese yen	
	6.1550/600	Swedish crowns	
	6.5220/70	Norwegian crowns	
	6.5325/75	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	413.75/414.15	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — The market closed weaker, dragged down by the bearish influence of Tokyo and fears Wall Street could follow suit. The All Ordinaries closed down 3.6 at 1,661.2.

TOKYO — Share prices plummeted as news swept the market that U.S. bond futures were heavily sold after the New York close, sparking fears of a sharp reaction on Wall Street. The Nikkei crashed through 37,000, plunging 599.04 to 36,778.98.

HONG KONG — Share prices closed slightly easier after thin and narrow-range trading. Most locals closed their books ahead of the lunar new year holidays that begin Thursday night. The Hang Seng closed 6.6 lower at 2,756.39.

SINGAPORE — The Straits Times Industrial Index closed below 1,500 as share prices fell sharply across the board in moderately active trading. The 30-share index of Singapore blue chips dived 25.48 to end at 1,495.25.

BOMBAY — Share prices ended mixed on stray profit-taking after the market opened higher.

FRANKFURT — A sharp fall on the Tokyo exchange and fears U.S. shares would record large losses drove German stocks down 2.5 per cent. The Dax Index slumped 45.11 points to 1,756.41.

PARIS — French share prices ended weaker but well off mid-session lows, as a stronger than expected opening on Wall Street sparked an afternoon recovery. The CAC-40 index ended 30.63 points down at 1,881.73.

LONDON — Shares rallied from lows in late trade as Wall Street defied dealers' worst fears and stabilised after an early slump. By 1543 GMT the FTSE was 25.0 points off at 2,266.1.

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks remained near the lows of the day-at midmorning, with blue chips slightly improved from the worst levels. The Dow was down 35 points at 2599.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"I picked up after myself once. All that lifting made me musclebound."

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HARRIS 12-28

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ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

Israel, Illinois sign agreement

TEL AVIV (AP) — Illinois officials Tuesday signed a memorandum of agreement with the Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) to build a helicopter maintenance centre in the U.S. state, IAI spokesman said. The agreement is to be carried out by the U.S.-based subsidiary of the IAI, Israel Aircraft Service Incorporated, the state of Illinois and the Greater Rockford Illinois Airport Authority, IAI spokesman Phil Herman said. According to the agreement, a depot-level helicopter service facility would be built at the Rockford airport and the installation would be managed by the Israel Aircraft Service with the full support of the IAI. Herman noted that "the completion of the proposed facility is predicated on the hoped for realisation of a number of commercial opportunities in the U.S." he did not elaborate. Illinois Governor James Thompson signed on behalf of the U.S. state, Herman said. Israel radio reported the new centre would cost \$3 million and that the IAI would invest \$2.5 million in the installation.

Israel, USSR to sign business accord

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel and the Soviet Union are to sign an accord on commercial relations next weekend, opening the way for the first business deals in 22 years since Moscow severed diplomatic ties, the foreign ministry said Tuesday. The accord, between the Israeli and Soviet chambers of commerce, will be signed in Moscow by Yaacov Cohen, the ministry's deputy director-general for economic affairs. It will be the latest step in slowly thawing ties with the Kremlin following the restoration of low-level consular ties in 1987. Science Minister Ezer Weizman held talks in Moscow and signed a scientific cooperation agreement earlier this month.

British labour costs rise

LONDON (R) — British labour costs are rising but industrial output is down as a result of relatively high interest rates the government has imposed in its fight against inflation, official figures have shown. "Our problem is we are spending too much and producing too little," said Steven Bell, chief economist at London merchant bank Morgan Grenfell. The Department of Employment said average unit wage and salary costs in manufacturing rose an annual 5.6 per cent in the three months to November, after rising a revised year-on-year 5.1 per cent in the three months to October. The Central Statistical Office reported manufacturing production fell a provisional, seasonally adjusted 0.7 per cent in November after a revised one per cent increase in October. Industrial output, which includes oil and gas production, dipped 0.5 per cent in November after a 0.9 per cent increase in October. Britain is Western Europe's biggest petroleum producer. Bell described the output figures as "pretty awful." "For most of our competitors, that number is nil or negative," he added.

New data highlights East German decline

EAST BERLIN (AP) — East Germany's troubled economy posted its lowest growth of the decade last year, expanding at only half the rate targeted by central planners, the state-run news agency ADN reported Tuesday.

ADN also said a new round of price increases, this time affecting the farm sector, will make some of its products substantially more expensive for consumers starting Feb. 1.

West German Economics Minister Helmut Haussmann said that communist premier Hans Modrow had agreed in principle to accept an offer of 6 billion marks (\$3.5 billion) in West German aid for East German small and medium-size businesses.

Haussmann, speaking to reporters after meeting with Modrow, did not make clear whether the East German government leader had met West Germany's demands for free-market reforms to which it has tied the aid.

But he said East German officials promised to enact new laws to make itself attractive to West German investors and spur its economy "in the shortest time possible."

The first measures could be in place within two months, Haussmann said after heading a West German delegation of government officials, businessmen and bankers in the inaugural meeting of an intra-German economic commission.

The panel, which also includes East German state economic officials, was set up at last month's summit between Modrow and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to broaden economic ties between the two countries.

Haussmann said he was "very satisfied" with Tuesday's talks on inter-German economic cooperation.

"Significant obstacles in the way of restoring the health of East Germany's economy could be overcome," Haussmann said the discussions showed.

The government's annual economic report said East Germany's "national income," or economic output, grew only two per cent last year. The goal set by East Berlin's ousted leaders was four per cent.

ADN quoted the head of the country's state central bureau for statistics, Arno Dunda, as saying the 1989 economic growth rate was the slowest of the 1980s.

Dunda listed several factors dogging the East German economy, but foremost among those was a two per cent drop in industrial production during the fourth quarter that apparently was caused by the massive outflow of East German citizens to the West.

More than 340,000 East Germans fled in 1989.

Meanwhile, ADN quoted East German printers' union chairman Werner Peplowski as saying there are 85,000 unemployed in East Germany, which theoretically should have full employment under a centrally planned economy.

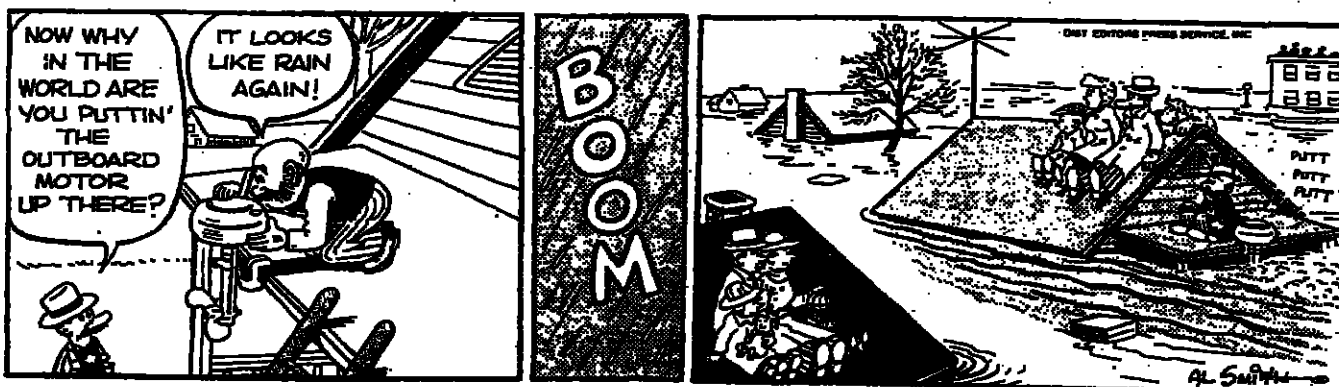
East German officials said Tuesday they wanted to start publishing figures on unemployment and inflation, two evils of capitalism that up until now did not exist here.

At a news conference, the Central Statistics Office said it was working on the subject and hoped to publish both sets of data soon.

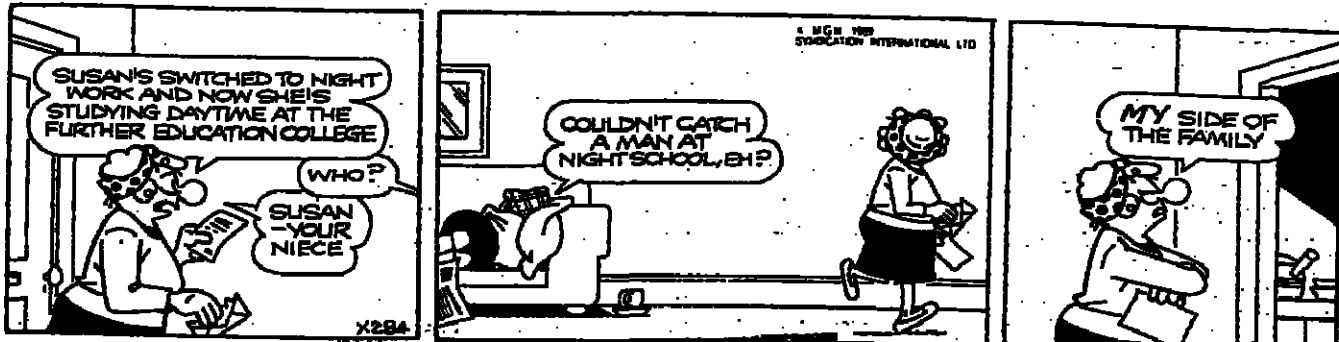
Peanuts



Mutt'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



OT: 10:10

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY JANUARY 25, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A day of much activity for tomorrow's New Moon and Solar Eclipse brings out the best of ideas that most persons can envision and gives hope for more imaginative careers in days ahead.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You will have good ideas today how to invest your money. Don't allow a woman to make trouble for you in your romantic life today.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Avoid pleasures today in which you will have to spend some money. Take your attachment with you on a trip to have a good time.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Your best time now socially will be in quiet, private conversations and intimate meetings with friends. A romantic time with music can now be yours.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Your own ideas about putting a deal together will make you more money. Your devotion to your attachment today will bring pleasure.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You will need to get a better understanding of a problem before you can create a solution. A good friend will help you settle a romantic problem.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You will have good ideas today how to invest your money. Don't allow a woman to make trouble for you in your romantic life today.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You will be invited to an intimate party today which will be won for you to attend. A most ingenious project comes along which will bring you money.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A change in the way that you put your ideas across will bring you much success. Two associates join with you at social events that you have fun.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You will be busy in social projects in which good friends are very much involved. Go along with what your attachment wants to be done.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Go along with friends to places of recreation and amusement to have a good time. If you do not frustrate your taste you will have good times.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Accept all invitations suggested by your attachment today. Don't hold back longer with that business proposition.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A promise made by you to a friend has to be carried out by you to have a friend. This is your day to gain unexpected benefits.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JANUARY 26, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You now will be able to situate at home both members of your family as well as your friends. A man in your family will give you advice on your taste.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A usual ally will bring you the opportunity to have a good time today. A better understanding of your financial position will help you with taste.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Private arrangements made with active friends will bring you the chance for more happiness at entertainments.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Your own ideas for adding to your income will be best right now. Do not listen to a bitter friend trying to cause trouble with taste.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is the day to really enjoy yourself with friends. You will now have two sources by which to add to your money and business.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you want to keep good friends, don't get into a fight with them over money. Don't let over an argument with your romantic one.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can give some financial security by not arguing over money matters now. Get some unique and unusual present for your attachment.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Outside friends are in the mood to entertain you pleasantly today.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A project from afar that you thought was finished comes back to life to bring you success. Your attachment wants to help you so do by all means.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You will have a brilliant idea for making money. Follow through. You will want romance but need to apply as much charm to achieve it.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This will be a marvelous day for you to enjoy your romantic attachment.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Friends will now expect you to help them with obligations; so do so, but with great care. You will now have a new attitude towards taste that is good.

Tyson's knockdown causes splash

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese sports papers splashed "shock" over world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson going down in a sparring session, and a trainer said Wednesday that Tyson was "feeling not too strong."

Another trainer said, however, it was "a slip or push or something" in Tuesday's sparring, and no matter of concern.

Promoter Don King said: "I didn't see it. But whatever it is, it's good for the sport and good for boxing in Japan because now everybody works hard."

Tyson, preparing for his second title defense in Tokyo in two years, shortened his sparring on Wednesday and decided to take Thursday off, said trainer Aaron Snowell.

"It will be Tyson's first day off since he came here one week ago. He has sparred every day since then," Snowell said.

He said each day's sparring is decided on how the boxer feels. "Today he said he don't feel too strong," Snowell said.

Becker falls to Wilander; Lendl, Edberg defy heat

MELBOURNE (R) — Mats Wilander returned to top form to score a majestic three set win over Boris Becker in the quarter-final of the Australian Open tennis championships on Wednesday.

Wilander, going for his fourth Australian title, was at his classic best in cutting down second seed Becker 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 in the 37 degree Celsius (98 Fahrenheit) heat and swirling wind on the Centre Court.

Becker, who has never gone beyond the quarterfinals of the tournament, was lurching in the heat, netting five backhands in losing the final game.

Facing defeat, Becker took off his protective hat for the third set, but it made no difference and he continued to be beaten by the deadly passing shots from Wilander.

Becker had come back from two sets down against Czechoslovakia's Miloslav Mecir in the fourth round on Monday but

Wilander, the eighth seed, was a different proposition.

It was sweet revenge for Wilander, who was last month beaten by Becker during West Germany's Davis Cup final win.

"After the first set I thought I had a chance but I also remembered what he did against Mecir," said Wilander.

"I was a little surprised I was able to read his serve as well as I did."

Wilander now plays fellow Swede Stefan Edberg in the semifinals. Edberg beat American David Wheaton 7-5, 7-6 (7-4), 3-6, 6-2 on number one court while top seed Ivan Lendl was comfortably disposing of the Soviet Union's Andrei Cherkasov 6-3, 6-2, 6-3 on Centre Court.

Defending champion Lendl used little energy to reach the semifinals, taking just two hours to outclass Cherkasov.

"The hot wind was pretty bad. It was just unpleasant. I did not

want to be out there for five sets," said Lendl, who was far too strong for his opponent.

Lendl began the match with a service break, and although Cherkasov, ranked 82 in the world, rallied well in the middle of each set, he was never a threat.

Lendl said his foreign legion-style hat, with a flap over the neck, was a big help, but he will come under stronger pressure in the semifinals, where he will meet either Yannick Noah of France or Mikael Pernfors of Sweden.

Tournament officials said that if the players agree they are considering closing the roof of the Centre Court for the semifinals to lower the temperature. The rules state that if a temperature of over 35 degrees Celsius (95 Fahrenheit) is forecast at 9 a.m., the roof can be closed.

"I don't enjoy being out there to the point of being physically and mentally exhausted," said Lendl.

Third seed Edberg also battled through the heat and strong winds on the more exposed number one court to see off the gallant challenge of Wheaton.

The American, ranked 46 in the world, squandered a set point in the second set but won the third as Edberg's concentration wavered in the difficult conditions.

The hot, northerly wind blew so strongly that courtside umbrellas and Wheaton's chair were overturned but twice Australian Open champion Edberg recovered to break his opponent in the first and seventh games of the fourth set to set up victory.

"I could have found myself in a bit of trouble if I had lost the second set," said Edberg, involved in a five-set men's doubles match the previous evening.

"I lost my rhythm almost completely after the first set but I told myself to cool down and do the business."

THE Daily Crossword

by Fred Toole

ACROSS

- 1 Dated
- 2 Rice dish
- 3 Paddock
- 4 Adjust
- 5 Vowelled
- 6 Coral isle
- 7 Major road
- 8 Yacht rarely
- 9 Golf club part
- 10 Fishing term
- 11 Quarrelsome
- 12 Fellow's husband
- 13 Reporter's question
- 14 Egypt, cotton
- 15 "I - Can't - See"
- 16 Two-room
- 17 Regarding
- 18 Eva's mate
- 19 Adjusting
- 20 Hedonist's end
- 21 Flirting
- 22 Northward
- 23 Once called
- 24 Ship's alarm
- 25 Ogle
- 26 Cashier
- 27 Toward
- 28 Unit of matter
- 29 Halt
- 30 Hog's homes
- 31 Mount
- 32 Flooded one
- 33 Air, gully
- 34 Of an ancient culture
- 35 Torship
- 36 Bring about
- 37 Met's book
- 38 Sweetshop
- 39 Squid
- 40 Surrender
- 41 Pledge
- 42 Cartoonist
- 43 Rural hotel
- 44 Defensive spray
- 45 October brew
- 46 Jory group
- 47 Roma's land
- 48 Round part
- 49 The total
- 50 Polar head
- 51 Gracile
- 52 Enslavery
- 53 Aot the coquette
- 54 Child's game
- 55 Bonkers
- 56 Plenty for poets
- 57 Farm unit
- 58 Killer whale
- 59 Luminary
- 60 Choir member
- 61 Stained
- 62 Native suff.
- 63 Successor to FDR

British community vs. Arab Insurance

The British community soccer team will meet the Arab Life & Accident Insurance Co. soccer team in a match to be held Friday Jan. 26 at the University of Jordan stadium at 2 p.m.

The match was arranged jointly by the British Embassy and the Arab Life & Accident Insurance Co.

The Arab life team is a relatively new team with a good record of soccer matches in which technical touches and exciting incidents took place which pleased their fans and supporters.

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EMBASSY OF INDIA, AMMAN REPUBLIC DAY

To mark the Republic Day of India, a flag hoisting ceremony will take place on Friday, January 26, 1990 at 10:00 a.m. at the Embassy of India, First Circle, Jabal Amman. All Indian nationals are cordially invited to attend the ceremony.

ADVERTISEMENT COMMODITY IMPORT PROGRAM (CIP)

ATTENTION: Private sector importers and local banks

Approximately \$2 million in foreign exchange is available in Commodity Import Program (CIP) letter of credit financing on a first-come, first served basis to private sector Jordanian importers for eligible imports of U.S. make or manufacture. Priority will be given to imports of raw materials and intermediate goods.

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2. Up to three (3) years for capital goods.

To apply, importers should make applications to their local banks and request CIP financing. For additional information, importers or banks may call USAID/Jordan at tel. no. 604171 and request to talk with CIP office personnel.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA MURIEL
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MAKE SURE YOU GET YOURS!

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 9 12
♥ A 8 7 6 4
♦ 5 3
♣ 10 9 4

EAST
♠ 6 4
♥ K Q J 10 9 5 3
♦ 10 8 7 6 4 2
♣ 8 2

SOUTH
♠ A K Q J 10 7 3
♥ 2
♦ A 9
♣ A K Q

The bidding:
South West North East
2 ♠ 4 ♠ 4 ♠ Pass
6 ♠ Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: King of ♠

Most of us complain that we are dealt few enough tricks in our bridge lifetime. Therefore, we must make every effort to husband those that are ours.

South's two-spade opening was natural and forcing. Over West's preempt, North felt three trumps and a ruffing value in diamonds made a bid of four spades preferable to a double. Since North was unlikely to have as much as an ace

and a king for his competitive action, South decided a small slam was more than adequate.

West's king of hearts was the natural opening lead. Declarer called for dummy's ace, East ruffed and returned a trump, and declarer eventually had to concede a diamond for a one-trick set.

A pause for reflection before playing the first trick would have enabled declarer to count 12 tricks—seven spades, three clubs and the two red aces. Therefore, the spade slam was unbearable as long as declarer did not indulge in a trick-reduction play. Since West almost surely had a seven-card suit to jump to four hearts, putting up the ace of hearts for East to ruff away is a prime example of that type of folly.

To preserve his 12 tricks, declarer should simply play low from the table at the first trick, retaining the ace for a later role. Declarer can then ruff the heart continuation, again playing low from dummy, draw trumps and cross to the table with a trump. The ace of hearts serves as a parking place for declarer's losing diamond, and the small slam is in the bag.

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CONCORD

WHAT GUYS?
(Arabic)

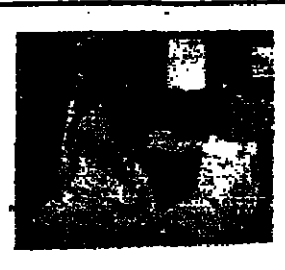


Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

MY SISTER
(Arabic)



Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 675571

NIJOUN

BIG BUSINESS



Performances: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:00 a.m.

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PLAZA

SUMMER JOB



Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30



CAMPAIN PARADE: Sitting in a wheelchair with her broken leg raised, Nicaraguan presidential candidate Violeta Chamorro of the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO) flash the

victory sign to supporters as she rides through a campaign parade in Managua in her first appearance after a surgery on her leg. Elections are scheduled to be held Feb. 25.

Webster sees reduced Soviet military threat

WASHINGTON (AP) — The director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) told Congress Tuesday that Eastern Europe's tumultuous push for democracy has cut the Soviet threat to the West.

William Webster, in an unusual public appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee, said that as unchallenged Communist control comes to an end in the Eastern bloc, those nations' links to Moscow have been radically changed.

The result, he said, is a severe blow to the Soviet Union's certainty that Eastern Europe will respond to Moscow's military directives.

The Armed Services Committee is beginning work on writing a defense budget for fiscal 1991 with an assessment of the Soviet threat to the West.

"Overall, the conventional threat to the United States and our alliance partners in Europe has decreased as a result of changes in Eastern Europe and Soviet force reductions," Webster told the panel.

The CIA Director cautioned, however, that the Soviet Union

was vigorously upgrading its strategic forces.

Webster cited the Soviets' deployment last year of two new, silo-based, nuclear missiles; the continued deployment of SS-25 and SS-24 rail-mobile missiles; and the launching of new Typhoon and Delta-IV ballistic missile submarines.

"The Soviets also have made considerable gains in the anti-submarine effort, but they still will be unable at least in this decade to threaten U.S. subs in the open ocean," Webster said.

In what appeared to be a plea to head off budget cuts for the CIA and other intelligence agencies, Webster said the United States must maintain its intelligence capability. He pointed to the continued Soviet strategic modernization and to terrorism, illegal drugs, uncertainty in Latin America, Asia and the Middle East, and weapons proliferation.

Intelligence operations are hidden in the defense department budget, which faces significant cuts on Capitol Hill this year. Although the exact figures are secret, U.S. intelligence reportedly spends \$25 billion to \$30

billion a year, just under 10 percent of the defense budget.

In his public statement, Webster emphasized that the situation in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is in constant flux with widespread economic problems, turmoil in regional areas and the Communist Party's reduced power.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev is committed to reforms, but they have been slow in coming, the CIA director said. The chance of Gorbachev's removal as Kremlin leader is unlikely, and a major reversal of his policies would come only if he is removed from power, Webster said.

Nevertheless, "we can probably expect a continued diminution — but not elimination — of Soviet threats to U.S. interests," the CIA director said.

A question-and-answer session with members of the committee was held in closed session.

The director of the Defense Intelligence Agency agreed with Webster, telling the committee that the threat of "deliberate aggression directed against Europe and its extension to global conflict is much reduced."

Kashmiri policemen revolt against army intervention

SRINAGAR (Agencies) — Hundreds of policemen waving rifles and shouting "Death to the Indian army" refused to work Wednesday, hampering government efforts to halt a violent rebellion in Kashmir.

At least 57 people, mostly Muslim militants, have been killed since Saturday when the government launched a crackdown on Kashmiri militants who want to secede from India and become independent or merge with Pakistan.

One death was reported Wednesday. A militant was killed when paramilitary forces, fearing an attack, opened fire on a mob, a senior police official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The striking policemen, many in the brown uniforms of the Muslim-dominated Jammu-Kashmir state constabulary, stopped police vehicles in the streets and urged their colleagues to join the protest.

Head Constable Mohammad Iqbal, one of the striking policemen, said at least a third of the 40,000-man force had refused to report for duty to protest the

deployment of the army to control the agitation.

"This is the beginning of a new chapter in Kashmir," he said. "We have been driven to the wall so we are reacting."

A total of about 1,000 policemen were seen in three separate groups stopping cars driven by other policemen. One group of about 300 shouted: "Death to the Indian army" and "Indians go back."

Hitenra Narain Saxena, the top police official in the state, said dissenting policemen were a tiny minority.

"I have gone around the city and I am saying the police are not on strike," he said.

"Over the years, fundamentalists and their supporters have got into the police force because there was no screening. But they are only a handful," Saxena said.

Stimulating tension between Kashmir police and federal troops flared Sunday after a policeman was shot and killed by soldiers enforcing an around-the-clock curfew in Srinagar.

Officers in Srinagar and a senior government spokesman in New Delhi Sunday confirmed the

killing and said it was an accident.

The striking policemen did not openly express support for the escalating rebellion in the state. But one of them said: "The government calls us terrorists. If that is the case, why should we fire at our own people?"

He spoke on condition of anonymity.

About 300 protesting policemen marched to the police control centre.

"They (the government) call us Pakistan dogs. We are not... let the Indian army and others know we will smash them if they confront us," constable Mohammad Afzal told the crowd.

Srinagar's police inspector general, Mohammad Azhar Noman, appealed to the men to return to duty and to come to him with any grievances.

Climbing atop his jeep, Noman told the crowd: "Don't get agitated. Don't get provoked."

Afzal said the strikers had two demands: the army and other federal troops must leave Kashmir and the government must reinstate a police union dissolved in 1979.

Talks aimed at soothing

fringe relation between India and Pakistan ended in bitter re-

negotiations over Kashmir. Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan and Indian External Affairs Minister Inder Gujral met for two days of talks just as violence exploded in the state.

Pakistan's embassy said Khan denied Indian charges that his country aided the Kashmiri militants.

"The current turmoil in the Kashmir valley was purely indigenous and resulted from the denial of the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir," the embassy quoted Yaqub Khan as saying.

An Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman said India protested against Pakistani involvement in "terrorist activity" and "reiterated that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and any interference in our internal affairs would be unacceptable."

The two countries have a history of animosity and have fought three wars, two of them over Kashmir, since they gained independence from Britain in 1947. The last war was in 1971.

Romanian front turns party, announces May elections

BUCHAREST (R) — The National Salvation Front (NSF), which has run Romania since the overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu last month, has set May 20 for general elections and said it would become a political party to contest them.

The front reversed an earlier pledge to lead the country into the first free elections in four decades and then dissolve itself.

Tuesday's near-unanimous decision by the council of the NSF brought cries of outrage from some of the 15 political parties which have registered since Ceausescu was ousted Dec. 22.

The National Liberal Party, the oldest Romanian party which is struggling to reform after 24 years of Ceausescu's one-party Communist rule, called the decision "an act of public betrayal."

Students and other political groups said they would bring their protests to the streets, threatening to disrupt the country's fragile peace.

"This is a completely illegal step... they have no legitimacy to rule," declared the National Peasants' Party.

It and other parties said the front, which contains many former Communists, is trying to substitute a new one-party state for the old.

They added that the front's control of the media and political power gave it an unfair advantage. If its members wanted to stand in the election they should first leave the front council.

But front leader and interim President Ion Iliescu strongly defended the decision, saying his movement's legitimacy "was given by the popular revolution which generated it."

Most of the council members agreed with him, voting by 128 to eight to contest the elections, and by even larger margins to hold the polls on May 20 and to ban foreign funds for any party.

As a concession to the other parties it voted to invite the United Nations to observe the election.

Leading dissident Doina Cornea, who had earlier called for mass protests if the front turned itself into a party, quit the NSF in protest.

Veteran liberal leader Ion Ratiu was to return from exile Wednesday and is likely to add his voice to the protests.

The 15 political parties are due to meet the front for round-table discussions Saturday.

The Justice Ministry said the trial of four leading Ceausescu henchmen also began Saturday, which could divert public attention from the round-table talks.

The four top aides to Ceausescu were charged Monday with being accomplices in the crime of genocide. They were served with indictments also accusing them of helping Ceausescu and his wife Elena in their vain bid to suppress the popular uprising which toppled them.

Japanese polls set for Feb. 18

TOKYO (R) — Japan's cabinet Wednesday dissolved the lower house of Parliament and set Feb. 18 as the date for general elections, which will be the toughest test for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in its 34-year rule.

The two-week campaign, which will kick off officially on Feb. 3, will show how well the ruling party has survived opposition attacks on the issue of political ethics, an unpopular sales tax and farm policies.

Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu and other LDP leaders said their target was to win 257 seats, a simple majority, in the 512-member lower house.

Top government spokesman Mayumi Morioka said the election was a choice between liberalism and socialism.

"In the world, the superiority of freedom, democracy and the market economy, which we have chosen, has been confirmed," Morioka, the chief cabinet secretary, said in reference to recent events in Eastern Europe.

"This will show whether politics in the 1990s, a decade when Japan must make difficult international decisions, will be steered by the LDP or the socialists," LDP Secretary-General Ichiro Ozawa said.

The upper house, the less powerful of the two chambers, is under opposition control after the LDP's historic defeat in elections last July.

That defeat, the worst since the LDP's formation in 1955, was

blamed on the inept introduction of the unpopular sales tax, the "Reform" shares-for-favours scandal and government attempts to open farm trade to imports.

The main opposition Japan Socialist Party (JSP) criticized the government for dissolving parliament before Kaifu had delivered a traditional policy speech.

"Mr. Kaifu dissolved the Diet without giving us a chance to ask questions on his policy speech. This cannot be accepted," JSP Chairwoman Takako Doi said in a nationally televised interview.

The head of another opposition party, the Buddhist-backed Komeito, said the LDP was politically bankrupt.

"The LDP is in a blind alley. We will have to build an entire new era," said Komeito Chairman Koshiro Ishida.

"It is about time for the average citizen to participate in politics here as they have done in many Eastern European nations," said Satsuki Edo, leader of the tiny opposition Socialist Democratic Federation.

"The Berlin Wall exists in Japan in the LDP's dictatorship," Edo said.

Business groups backed the ruling party.

"We in the business sector have seen growth since the war because the LDP has given the country political stability," said Eishiro Saito, chairman of the powerful Keidanren, the Japan federation of economic organizations.

Medellin cartel chief says he is still in control

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — A letter purportedly from Medellin cartel leader Pablo Escobar says he remains in control of Colombia's most powerful cocaine trafficking outfit and that it is united in its decision to seek peace with the government.

The letter also swore the cartel would continue a war with a rival organization based in the southern city of Cali.

It accused the Cali cartel of providing authorities with information that led to the death of his close associate, Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, in a shootout with police last month.

Escobar wrote to El Tiempo publisher Hernandez Santos Castillo denying a report Monday in the Bogota newspaper that the Medellin cartel was split. The article quoted security force officials as saying Escobar's main allies were abandoning him as police and the military closed in.

"My freedom is the best proof I have to show the country that the people are not selling me out and that my friends are neither abandoning nor betraying me," said the letter, also sent to other news media.

It bore Escobar's signature and what was apparently the imprint of his index finger, intended to prove its authenticity.

Authorities have failed to apprehend Escobar despite a government offer of \$500,000 for information leading to his capture.

Escobar said the entire cartel was behind a peace offer made by its leaders last week to the government of President Virgilio

Barco.

Military forces said meanwhile Tuesday that they were taking the necessary measures to protect President Bush from Escobar and other traffickers when Bush attends an anti-drug summit in the coastal city of Cartagena Feb. 15.

U.S. authorities have reportedly said traffickers are preparing an attempt on Bush's life during the five hours he is to spend in Cartagena.

The Barco administration has extradited 13 trafficking suspects to the United States as part of an anti-drug campaign that was intensified last August.

The druglords responded with a terror campaign that killed 209 people, including bombing a Colombian airliner.

The peace offer by the Medellin cartel last week, unlike previous proposals, did not specifically demand an end to extradition of suspects to the United States, the measure traffickers fear most.

It asked only for "constitutional and legal guarantees" in exchange for the cartel's agreeing to abandon the cocaine trade, lay down its arms and release its hostages.

Since last week, the cartel has released five hostages, including the son of Barco's closest aide, but still holds 16 people.

El Tiempo reported Monday the peace offer was made by the cartel's leaders, Escobar and Jorge Luis Ochoa, and that other traffickers in the organization opposed any accommodation with the government.

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U.S. seeks to protect Noriega secrets

MIAMI (AP) — The U.S. government sought Tuesday to protect top secret intelligence files from seeing all the evidence that's going to be presented for the defense, said Kenneth Swartz, a federal public defender representing Noriega co-defendant Luis Del Cid. "It's overbearing and unnecessary, and a step in the wrong direction."

The government requested a hearing on its motion, but no date has been set.

The move was prompted, the government said, by a classified information procedures act notification from Michael O'Kane, a defense attorney for indicted pilot Daniel Miranda, another Noriega co-defendant in the February 1988 drug-trafficking indictment.

O'Kane has been outspoken in calling Noriega to trial of the United States who acted with CIA approval, and conceded his search for sensitive documents is designed to force the govern-

ment's hand, a practice often referred to as graymail.

"The hidden agenda of the government is not to release any of this stuff," O'Kane said Tuesday. "The intelligence community doesn't want any of it released."

The government's unwillingness to release sensitive information could help his client go free, he said.

Meanwhile, Noriega's attorneys have submitted addresses of two homes and three military offices raided by U.S. troops during the invasion of Panama last month, and are asking for an inventory of all materials taken from them.

The addresses comply with a ruling by U.S. Magistrate William Turnoff, who Friday ordered the government to preserve all such evidence and submit a list of everything taken from the sites.

Hato, along with offices at the destroyed Panamanian Defence Force headquarters, the joint U.S.-Panama base at Fort Amador, and the Departamento Nacional de Investigaciones.

Noriega is scheduled Friday for a bond hearing, and the defense said it needs the documents to counter government efforts to show Noriega as a risk of flight and a danger to the community, and therefore ineligible for bond.

The Defence Department initially claimed it had confiscated large amounts of cocaine at one Noriega residence, but Tuesday acknowledged that the wrapped packages were a material, possibly bonding glue, that resembled the powdered drug.

Noriega is still being held in a basement cell at the federal courthouse, but Cuba's ambassador to Panama, Lázaro Mora, claimed he has been allowed to make calls to the Cuban embassy there.

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Sihanouk quits as head of coalition

BEIJING (AP) — Cambodia's reluctant prince, Norodom Sihanouk, announced Wednesday he had resigned as president of the resistance's coalition government and would indefinitely cease meeting with most foreign diplomats.

He repeated an earlier statement that he would not attend any international conferences aimed at trying to resolve the Cambodian war. But he also said he would be a candidate for president if a political solution were reached and general elections held.

Sihanouk, who has quit several times in the past after disputes with his coalition partners, said he was resigning because of foreign accusations that he had become an accomplice in the Communist Khmer Rouge's drive to regain power in Cambodia.

The Khmer Rouge, which conducted a reign of terror in Cambodia from 1975 until early 1979 when an invasion by Vietnam drove them from the capital of Phnom Penh, is militarily the strongest of the three factions in the rebel coalition.

The Khmer Rouge has claimed major battle victories since Vietnam's announced troop withdrawal from Cambodia last September, raising fears they may once again rule the country.

Sihanouk, a non-Communist, always has had an uneasy relationship with the Khmer Rouge, but has insisted that the only way to contain the group is to include them in any political settlement.

Sihanouk last resigned as president in May 1987, when he accused his coalition partners of trying to discredit him and undermine his efforts to negotiate a settlement with Hun Sen's pro-Vietnamese government in Phnom Penh.

Sihanouk resumed the president's position the following February.

Sihanouk has behaved mercurially at times, suddenly deciding or refusing to meet Hun Sen or attend peace conferences.

In his latest statement, Sihanouk said he would retain the title of chief of state of Cambodia, which he held before being ousted in a 1970 coup led by the U.S.-backed Lon Nol. He said

Prince Norodom Sihanouk

the Lon Nol government was illegal and thus his old title is still in effect.

He said that after several scheduled appointments over the next few weeks he would stop meeting all foreign officials, diplomats and journalists. The exceptions are to be his "friends" from China and North Korea, the two countries where he lives most of the year.

Sihanouk has given qualified support to an Australian proposal to dismantle both the Cambodian resistance and Hun Sen's government and set up an interim U.N. administration to run the country and make preparations for a general election.

He said that because 101 members had ratified the document it had "universal validity."

She said the committee is focusing on some issues regarded as critical to the promotion of women's rights worldwide.

"No matter what country you're in, violence against women is a big problem — domestic violence, rape, all kinds of things," she said.

One of the most important issues that the committee takes up with states is their provision of family planning and abortion services for women, Evatt said.

"One has to appreciate, though, that there are many differing views about that throughout the world and that is reflected in the work of the committee," she added.

She said the committee also plans to address circumcision of

women in some countries, hoping that debate will lead to "recommendations we can make to change this traditional practice."

Evatt said the basic issues in the campaign to end discrimination against women focus on health, education, political participation and equal rights in the family.

Women in developed countries are more concerned with their role in the political process and child care services, while those in undeveloped nations face more acute concerns in the areas of health and education," she said. "But we cross frontiers. We all are working to change attitudes which assign women to a subordinate role."

"Women have not been given advancement within the system to the extent that they should and it should be changed," she said.

The U.N. Committee Discrimination Against Women will hear reports from the following nations through Feb. 1: West Germany, Tanzania, Malawi, the United Kingdom, Thailand, Peru, Turkey, the Ukrainian Republic of the Soviet Union, Mexico, Mongolia, Egypt and Canada.

101 countries ratify U.N. treaty on women's rights

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The head of a U.N. committee on discrimination against women said Tuesday that 101 countries had agreed to terms of and international treaty on equal rights for men and women.

Sixty U.N. members, including the United States, have not ratified the document.

Elizabeth Evatt of Australia said some countries have endorsed the treaty while stipulating reservations to certain portions, but the committee hopes to encourage those nations to eventually agree to all of the provisions.

She cited Islamic countries as an example, saying some have stipulated they will not be bound by provisions in violation of Islamic teachings that establish different rights for men and women.

This is something the committee is very concerned about and has interest in. And we try to ask of these countries for more information about what Islam means for the status of women in a particular country," Evatt said at a news conference.

The U.N. General Assembly adopted the measure on women's rights in 1979 and it became an

international treaty after the 20th country ratified it in 1981.

The treaty calls for states to take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to guarantee equal rights for men and women. It specifies civil rights, family planning, political access and employment opportunities as key areas of concern.

Evatt said that because 101 members had ratified the document it had "universal validity."

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Sex association formed in E. Germany

EAST BERLIN (R) — The German Sex Union (DSU) has been founded in East Germany for those who don't see democratic politics as life's sole pleasure. Formed at the weekend under the slogan "Pleasure not Frustration" and "Love not Violence," the DSU will be open to people over 15 regardless of political or sexual persuasion, the Berliner Zeitung daily said. It gave no details about the group's planned activities.

Police break service in jail drug racket

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli police have put a stop to the Wimbledon Game played by prisoners in which tennis balls packed with heroin were lobbed into the prison yard. They said two people were arrested outside the Abu Kabir prison for throwing the balls. Prisoners named the scheme after the Wimbledon tennis tournament in London.

Condoms with paycheck

BRASIL (AP) — Six thousand employees of the Federal Savings Bank in the Brazilian capital were presented with condoms along with their paychecks as part of an effort to educate workers about the dangers of AIDS. Brazil has the world's second-highest number of cases of AIDS, with 9,555 confirmed cases through December, 1989. Only the United States has more — 115,158 cases.

A swim on the wild side

AUCKLAND (R) — Jim Smith swam with crocodiles while training for the Commonwealth Games. Smith, 35, a Zambian lawnmower-maker and farmer, endured his swim on the wild side in a crocodile-infested reservoir near his Lusaka home. "It's always in the back of your mind when you train. They don't worry me that much, but there's always a first time," he said. "The crocs are not so much a worry now. Nobody's been taken for a long time. The last time was five or six years ago. I've seen them coming towards me and have got out in a hurry. I tend to do all my breathing on one side so I can keep an eye on them. Perhaps my head's up all the time looking for the crocs." Smith, who is manager, coach and sole competitor in Zambia's games swimming team, is entered for the 50 and 100 metres freestyle.

Heron makes epic flight, gets killed

DUBLIN (R) — A rare American heron made an epic flight across the Atlantic — then promptly got killed by an Irish hunting dog. "This is a tragedy. It is a shame after surviving a flight across the Atlantic it should have met such an end," top Irish ornithologist Kilkenny Millarney said after the death of the bird, a long brown heron, was reported. "It was the first American heron known to have reached Ireland since 1973 so a lot of people, including many from Britain, would have liked to have seen it and must be very disappointed." It was killed in Wexford, southeast Ireland, Tuesday. Many birdwatchers were planning to flock over to see the rare bird, which was blown off-course over the Atlantic while migrating from North America to Central America for the winter.